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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

COMPASSIONATE MIND:
IMPLICATIONS OF A TEXT WRITTEN BY ELDER LOUIS SUNCHILD

BY

WALTER LIGHTNING

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

INTERNATIONAL/INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1992

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ISBN 0-315-77176-3

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Compassionate Mind: Implications of a Text Written by Elder Louis Sunchild*, by Walter Lightning in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in International/Intercultural Education.

Carl Urion, Supervisor

Marilyn I. Assheton-Smith

Anthony D. Fisher

Emily E. Hunter

Date Sept. 21, 1992

DEDICATION

To the late Louis Sunchild, and to the other Elders who have given me many rewarding experiences.

ABSTRACT

The late Elder Louis Sunchild from Sunchild Reserve, Alberta, was a teacher of Cree tradition, and was highly respected for his profound, comprehensive, and detailed knowledge. In the late 1980s he wrote a short text in Cree about the nature of the mind, and gave the author of this thesis his direction to interpret and to explain that text in writing. Because it is customary for elaboration of such topics to occur only in the context of face-to-face interaction, a text such as this is unusual. An initial step in this study was to develop methods for interpretation that were consistent with Cree protocols and traditions. A word-for-word translation is provided. Two assumptions about the nature of teacher-learner relationships, in context, and four structural principles for interpretation of the text are explained. Interpretation according to those principles and assumptions follows. A preliminary synthesis of the implications of some of the ideas contained in the text is presented in the form of a dialogue.

PREFACE

This work deals with some ideas about the nature of mind, as expressed by the late Elder Louis Sunchild. Those ideas are from a very old but vitally new tradition. It has been my privilege to work with a number of respected Cree Elders and the interpretation of the text that is the subject of the thesis is a reflection of their contribution to my own insight. I would like the readers of this thesis to know that I do not make any profession of extraordinary insight. Here is an example the frame of mind with which to approach this work.

Some time ago it was my privilege to have the responsibility to prepare the traditional protocol that is an initial step in some of the events in which Elders lead their people. In this case, I was in the company of the respected Elder, Art Raining Bird, from Rocky Boy, Montana. At that point the setting was very informal. I looked at him and the realization of who was sitting there made me realize how little I knew. He was sitting in the room where I was preparing the protocol, his white hair down to his shoulders. I thought of the tremendous respect in which he was held by his own people, the profound and detailed knowledge he had of our culture. His stature as spiritual leader in the community was more like that of an institution than a person. He knew what I was doing, but was not watching me intrusively. It was as though he were just noticing, but not noticing. I thought of how poorly I knew how to complete my task, and thought "What am I doing, trying to prepare the protocol? I don't know how to do this properly, and in the presence of a person who has seen this countless times and knows all its significance!"

I said to him in Cree "Grandfather, I don't know how to do these things. I am trying to prepare the protocol but I realize that basically I don't know anything. As a matter of fact, I have no idea what I'm doing. Please, I implore you, have compassion for what I am doing."

Elder Art Raining Bird, for all of his stature and knowledge, was a living example of humility. He looked at me and answered with a deep kindness and understanding, saying "It's nothing, my grandson. We don't know anything."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With thanks to

Elder Gordon Rain, presently the resident Elder at Maskwachees Cultural College, for taking over from where the late Louis Sunchild left off

my wife, Emma Lightning, for her support and encouragement

Carl Urion, for keeping the faith

Professor Emily Hunter, for her kind support and help toward a structural and linguistic understanding of the Cree language

Dr. Marilyn Assheton-Smith and Dr. Anthony D. Fisher, for reading this work and for agreeing to participate as members of my examining committee

and many others

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION THROUGH RELATED LITERATURE

Elder Louis Sunchild wrote a text for me in the Cree language about the mind. He told me I could use it as the basis for a thesis. The text reflects traditional Cree teaching. In my experience, it is unusual for an Elder to write out something like this, but he did it for a purpose.

There appeared to be several alternatives for ways to translate, interpret, and comment on the implications of the text. Much printed material discusses Native American traditions, religious and otherwise. There has been quite a bit of academic work done on those traditions. Regarding the interpretation of text, there are many academic approaches in linguistics, anthropology, and literature. In the end, there was no alternative but rather a clear direction. The *ideas* in the text can be understood by people who do not have experience in Cree teaching or Cree culture. The objective of the work is to demonstrate what some of those ideas are. It was clear that the ideas could be brought out and interpreted only by approaching the text within the interpretive framework provided by the culture in which it was written. There was little in previous approaches to which to refer.

I could find nothing in the academic writing that was like this text. Yet I would like to discuss the kinds of written work that is related to the teachings of Elders about tradition. Some of the material I found was valuable for insight. Yet, perhaps because of the unique nature of the text, I could find no appropriate model in academic tradition for how to interpret the text and how to present the results. I will discuss this literature, but most of it has little to do with the rest of the work.

The main body of the presentation has the following organization. The organization represents the sequence of steps in completion of the project as well.

1. Description of the background of how this text came to be
2. Presentation of the text itself in both Cree and English
3. Description of methods for interpretation of the meaning of the text in English
    a. Word by word translation of the text itself
    b. Discussion of principles involved in interpretation
4. An interpretation of the text
5. A general discussion of some of the implications of the text

The Scope of Related Literature

There is much academic and popular writing about indigenous people in the Americas, Indian Elders, indigenous American religion and spiritual thought, stories in traditional teaching, face-to-face interaction, and the oral

tradition. Interest areas in anthropology and in linguistics have also developed ways of analyzing texts of stories or narratives. There is a literature describing traditional values and processes in indigenous education.

As mentioned, little of all that written material seems to be related directly to this thesis or to the Elder's text. One would expect that there would be quite a bit of writing about how Indian people in Indian tradition have thought about the mind.

The scope of the literature mentioned above is so great that it would be impossible to list it here. It would not serve the purpose of the thesis to review the comprehensive literature, because most of it has no direct bearing on the content or structure of the Elder's text or the purpose of the thesis. Instead of providing a comprehensive review, it may be better to provide examples of the kinds of related written material that exists. A categorization of the literature, rather than a comprehensive review, would provide a better background to this text and its place in the literature.

The reason for looking at the range of works included here is to see what there was in printed sources that discussed Cree or other related cultures' concept of the mind, or the connectedness (or unity) of the mind with the spiritual and physical domains. I also looked for discussion of ways to analyze discourse in a way that would explain deeper meanings.

Writing About the Culture

Elders and Elders' Teachings

Some of the stories and teachings that are described in the literature have more authenticity than others. One judgement about authenticity comes from knowing where the stories and teaching originate. The Elders deal with this question of authenticity in their own way; in most of the cultures the Elders are the authorities, and authenticity comes from how closely associated the stories and narratives are associated with Elders.

The Elders' Teachings as Comprehensive Systems of Knowledge

Some popular sources have been quoted widely in the past 20 years or so that put forward comprehensive discussions of the teachings of particular Elders. It is not academic literature as such, but the sources are quoted in academic literature. Two notable ones are series of the teachings of a Yaqui Elder and a Lakota Elder. I cannot comment on the content of the books because though I have tried to read such books I cannot do so. The problems I have with those writings are in the areas of (a) authority and (b) context. It is not clear that whatever information is included in those writings is in fact published under culturally appropriate authority. In Cree tradition it is unlikely that an Elder would express himself or herself without a clearer reference to context—the way that the metaphors are supposed to fit with the

context—than is indicated in those writings. The result, in terms of culturally appropriate interpretation, is for me a jumble of confusion and misinformation. This is not intended to be a critical statement, but a personal one, as some people seem to find this kind of literature useful.

This category of writing is increasing. It may come from a growing interest in the belief systems of indigenous people. Perhaps some of it is "new age." It includes quite a bit of reference to ritual and to the specific meanings of Indian symbols and metaphors. One of the problems with it is that without the protocols and without the face-to-face interactional context, the reader is left with a focus on exotic symbols. In the "living" literature, the metaphors can change according to context. That is part of their "aliveness." The "belief system" is too complex to be related in a book of any size. There is a danger that it may trivialize the tradition as it misinterprets it.

Traditional Stories by the Elders

The Text of Elders' Traditional Stories. There are several collections of stories that are told by Elders. Cree tradition has at least two main categories of stories, *ocimowena* and *atayokewina*, and many other cultures have the same categories. The latter category consists of stories that can only be told by persons who have the authority to do so, during the proper season, and under the proper conditions. Some of the stories in collections of texts in fact fall into this category, even stories that are in collections of texts such as Bloomfield's (1930). Keeping constraints on the telling of these stories is for a purpose. It may be said that all of the stories form a huge and complex fabric. The stories cannot be understood unless they are told by persons who know (a) how to put the specific narrative within the context of all the other possible narratives in that complex fabric; (b) how to fit the way the story is told to the specific audience at the specific time; (c) the system of metaphor that is used or adapted in the story; (d) the authority under which the story is told.

The other category of story may be translated "legend," and a good example of that kind of story is the collection told by Saulteaux Elder Alexander Wolfe (1988). In the publication there is no attempt to "tell what the story means," but the texts speak for themselves. As Harvey Knight says in the introduction to the collection

> Because Indian oral tradition blends the material, spiritual, and philosophical together into one historical entity, it would be a clear violation of the culture from which it is derived if well-meaning scholars were to try to demythologize it, in order to give it greater validity in the Western sense of historiography. It would be equally unjust and inappropriate to place this history into the category of mythology or folklore, thereby stripping it of its significance as authentic historical documentation. (Wolfe, 1988, p. ix)

Elders' Stories As Text For Analysis. Analysis of stories is dealt with in a following section that is specifically about analysis, but it should be noted here that texts of stories told by Elders are sometimes published in connection with analysis of those stories (e.g., Nichols, 1989). In some cases the text that people analyze is in the form of a story, in some it is dialogue, and in some it is legend or autobiography. The text is sometimes provided in the indigenous language, and sometimes in translation.

Nichols (1989) is a good example of that idea of authenticity. He compared several versions of a Swampy Cree story in an attempt to describe where the versions came from. In the process of describing the story, he gives information of such a nature that someone who is familiar with the tradition can get a glimpse of the metaphoric meanings, but Nichols does not deal with the texts as "teachings" but more like "literature."

Elders' Biographies and Others Writing About Elders

There is published material that gives details of Elders' lives, as examples of traditional thought, and material that discusses Elders in more general terms. For example, Hammerschlag (1988) tells of his experience as a medical doctor in the American Southwest, and in the process tells of what he learned about health, disease, and living in harmony, from the Elders with whom he came in contact. There is some curriculum material that attempts to describe Indian Elders' lives or aspects of their teaching, to create lesson content. From examples of that kind of material, as represented under the descriptor of "Elders" in the ERIC database, the effort leaves much to be desired.

In 1977 Terry Tafoya called for Elders to be involved in formal education:

> Most of the curriculum material that I've encountered in the near decade I've been working the field has little relationship to either tradtional Indian teaching methods or to the current standards of conventional quality education. ... I feel it imperative that we return to the source—that we look back at how traditionally Native language, information, concepts and values were taught to our children. (Tafoya, 1977, p. 4)

He does not go on to say how to involve Elders, but says that what we are supposed to do is to find out from the Elders what to teach, and then adapt it to classroom use.

A sad example of Elders in the curriculum is a piece of curriculum material about a Winnebago Elder, Howard Joseph McKee. It is a two-page reading assignment giving sketchy details about the life of McKee, a language teacher, followed by several pages to ask students about the details. The hidden curriculum message is to remember incidental particulars from reading, nothing about Elders (Minneapolis Public Schools, 1977).

Agnes Grant (1987) has written a short article on how to involve Elders in storytelling in the classroom, if only through audio-taped stories in English. She quotes Basil Johnston, an Ojibway author, who said "It was the elders ... who taught about life through stories, parables, fables, allegories, songs, chants, and dances. They were the ones who had lived long enough and had had a path to follow and were deemed to possess the qualities for teaching" (Johnston, 1979, p. 69). Grant's description of the process of having Elders in the classroom implies something about what story structure means to Indian children.

Another unusual example of reference to Elders' discourse is in a research project focused on optimal educational building facility design for Navajo children, and the source of the information was Navajo Elders who were consulted extensively about the kinds of physical structures that corresponded to Navajo values, because they had expressed concern about the loss of language and lack of relevance to daily life of formal schooling (Dore, 1989).

Another indication of involving Elders, though not in formal discourse, was in a project in the Northwest United States. There was a high suicide rate amongst Indian young people who had been jailed for minor offences, but in a program where Elders stayed overnight with the jailed young people, the suicide rate was reduced 80% (Berlin, 1984).

A typical example of learning from Elders' lives and experiences is a collection edited by McFadden (1991). McFadden includes not only a description of Elders' life experiences but some indication of their thought and teaching. For example, Dr. Eunice Baumann-Nelson, a Penobscot, talks about her formal academic training and then her later realization of how to put it in the context of traditional teaching of the connectedness of all life. She discussed her own discovery of traditional values and her personal experiences that led her to this question:

> Now we know that connectedness does exist—that we are, in fact, connected to everything. It was known about, acknowledged, and acted upon by traditional Native Americans. My ancestors knew that we are related to the butterflies, trees, the ocean and rivers, the Sun, animals, plants, other humans, and everything. And actions based on this premise produced real results. My experience [of that sudden realization] had given me an unshakable conviction of my connectedness, and I had developed what to me was a rational explanation as to its ontogenetic source. But was it really 'real'? In what sense were we connected? What, if anything, formed these connections? (McFadden, 1991, p. 76)

Baumann-Nelson found her answer in a theory of "superstrings" developed in physics, and she relates that concept to traditional Native knowledge as she understands it.

The other Elders represented in the collection are not so academically oriented but in the vignettes about them there is some indication of the way they deal with "large" questions.

Elders' Own Narratives: Autobiography, History, and Traditional Teaching

Some works incorporate Elders' narratives verbatim, and in some of that literature the traditional teaching is evident. The most remarkable recent work is that written, edited or presented by Cruickshank (Cruickshank, Sidney, Smith, & Ned, 1990; Cruickshank, 1991) and by Ahenakew and Wolfart (1991).

In *Reading Voices (Dan Dha Ts'edenintth'e): Oral and Written Interpretations of the Yukon's Past*, Cruickshank (1991) includes English translation of narratives told to her, recorded, and worked over in collaboration with speakers of Athapaskan languages in Yukon. The book was written in order to begin to fill in some of the gaps of the written record about Yukon history by incorporating some of the Elders' knowledge of Yukon's past.

An unusual incorporation of Elders' thought and conversation is in a transcript of a meeting of Elders and young Dogrib in 1990, to create a mission statement for locally controlled Dogrib schools. The meeting was conducted in the Dogrib language. The meeting, including discussion, is more than a dialogue, it is the development of ideas about schooling in the community through discussion with Elders. The English-language transcript is published as *Mission Statement for the Dogrib Schools* (Martin, 1991), and includes the Elders' prayers, as well a transcript of the speech given by the late Chief Jimmy Bruneau upon the opening of the Chief Alex Arrowmaker School in Rae-Edzo, N.W.T., in 1972. Promoting respect from, and learning from, Elders is one of the primary objectives of the divisional school board.

Freda Ahenakew and H.C. Wolfart (1991) have just published a collection of texts that were told in Cree by Glecia Bear, Irene Calliou, Janet Feitz, Minnie Fraser, Alpha Lafond, Rosa Longneck, and Mary Wells (*kôhkominawak otâcimowiniwâwa: Our Grandmothers' Lives As Told In Their Own Words*). Like the Elder's text in this document, the texts are presented in Cree syllabics, Cree Roman orthography, and English. There is a lot of information in those vivid, vivid narratives. There is implicit discussion of "tradition" in some of the womens' accounts, so a young person who reads them in the appropriate frame of mind, who knew how to listen to stories, would find traditional teaching in them.

A book that is truly remarkable is a recent one by Julie Cruickshank (Cruickshank et al., 1990) in collaboration with Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned, Elders from Yukon. It is remarkable for several reasons. The first is the method that the collaborators employed. Cruickshank lived in Yukon for some time and became acquainted with Indian people there. Like many other anthropologists, she recorded stories and narratives. There is something almost unique about the way that she has been able to collaborate in this work and

from a Native point of view, to "get it right." Maybe the most remarkable thing is that it is evident that she has learned how to listen. Usually when people try to record stories and narratives there are problems; in almost all other collections the stories seem to have lost their "life." Perhaps that is because so few academics seem to have been able to discern the function, structure, and context for stories; that there are considerations of authority and context to be taken into account. Cruickshank respects the stories. The narratives in the 1990 collection are not presented as narratives about traditional ideas, the "heart" of the cultures. Yet they speak for themselves. The "ethos" is evident in the stories. So the truly remarkable thing about the collection of narratives is that a discerning reader can see the ethos in the text. You might say that in the presentation of the tradition, she lets the Elders do it.

Another author who provides faithful reproductions of stories told by Elders is Tedlock. He works both with Zuni stories as oral performances and with ancient written Maya texts (Tedlock, 1983). He pays attention to the way in which stories are told, and he seems to know how the idea of *authority* relates to the telling of a story. He does not try to get "inside the culture" but recognizes the authority of the story and of the narrative.

The Tradition in Literature

Some Native American writers who present short stories, novels, or poems, deal with traditional teachings in one way or another, and there is often an implication that the knowledge is "Elders'" knowledge. There are many of such works. I will cite, by way of example, Gerald Vizenor (1981). In some of his stories and his autobiographical accounts, there is an attempt to open a window on traditional teaching or thinking, where the object of the writing is to explain those things in the context of the story.

Writing About "Shamans"

Elders hold and teach the traditions of the people. Their teaching can be powerful. There is sometimes a confusion in writing or discussing Elders and their role, more or less assuming that all Elders are "shamans" or that all "shamans" are Elders. This is a distinction that is not dealt with in this thesis. Instead, I am going to assume that *shaman* is a Western non-Indian category of description. It is often assumed in the literature that it is shamans who teach the tradition, so that is a category in this discussion of the kinds of literature that can be found about Indian tradition. I have divided it into two sections, social science literature about shamans and popular literature about shamans.

Social Science Literature About Shamans

The literature about shamanism is extensive. It covers the social role of the shaman, shamanism as a kind of religion, description of shamanistic practices and rituals, and description of the symbols and metaphors that shamanism involves.

Even to scratch the surface of that topic would involve a very comprehensive bibliography. Instead, there is just an indication here of the kinds of literature that can be found. There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of other descriptions of shamanism in the social science literature.

A good example of social science work that combines several social science topics about shamanism is Grim's (1983) comparison of Ojibwa and Siberian shamanistic healing practices.

The social science objective has not been to perpetuate the tradition, nor even to explain it in its fullest dimensions, but to give objective description in ethnography and to relate shamanism to other aspects of a society. Even though anthropologists sometimes "get inside" the tradition and try to understand it from "the native's point of view," social science does not explain the spiritual tradition in the terms of the tradition itself, but rather in social science terms.[1]

Popular Work Regarding Indian Shamans

One of the most interesting but confusing kinds of publication is popular literature in which there is an attempt to describe traditional spiritual and ritual knowledge by describing "shamans" or "shamanistic rituals." A good example of this is the book *Native Healer: Initiation Into An Ancient Art*, by Robert G. Lake (1991), who practices as a medicine person in the authority of his name of "Medicine Grizzlybear." The forewords to his book are written by his traditional teacher, Rolling Thunder, and by Charlie Thom, a Karuk medicine person.

I do not understand this literature. I do not attempt to criticize it, but I can only say that though I recognize the superficial form of many of the rituals and states of mind that are described, I do not recognize the teaching or the medium of expression as being the same things that I know from my own cultural background and my own knowledge of traditional Cree practice.

---

[1]Dennis Tedlock (1983) says that Frank Cushing is the anthropologist's example of someone who has "gone native," in that during the course of field work he took on a "native" role in the community and seemed to live according to Zuni principles and to have more allegiance to Zuni principles than to the "Western" anthropological tradition in which he had been socialized. Tedlock says that it is likely Cushing that is remembered in this story: "Once they made a white man into a Priest of the Bow, he was out there with the other Bow Priests—, he had black stripes on his white body. The others said their prayers from their hearts, but he read his from a piece of paper" (Tedlock, 1983, p. 329).

Writing Focused on Specific Aspects of Indian Spirituality

Some authors write about very specific aspects of indigenous people's traditional religion, philosophy, and spirituality, rather than the complex whole. Often the objective is to explain something related to spirituality or tradition, not to explain the tradition itself. In other cases the object seems to be in fact to explain religious systems or spirituality by focusing on some component. The examples below deal with spirituality in connection with physical things (e.g., the pipe); behavioral things (e.g., physical practices and social effects); the environment; social and political consequences of religious "revitalization"; and things observed (e.g., the sky).

For example, Paper (1988) includes drawings and colour photographs of many pipes, focusing on old ones in museum collections. Sometimes Native religion is referred to as "the way of the Pipe," and that should indicate the central place that the pipe may have in the practice of Native spiritual traditions. Paper's field work appears to be not just "academic," as it seems that the work that went into the book was as much a personal quest as an academic one. That aside, many Native people would be uncomfortable with the reproduction of the photographs. Most of the discussion of spirituality focuses on the ritual of it.

Steiger (1974) wrote a journalistic (not analytic) book about "revival" of Indian ways. In the process he attempts to tell the basic precepts of American indigenous spiritual thought, but the book is in fact about the political and social consequences of "revitalization." It does not appear that his sources were sources of traditional authority, but that was not the intent of his book.

Gill (1987) writes from the perspective of having observed traditional Navajo people in the practice of their spiritual ways, and wants to focus on the actions he has observed, and more or less to let those actions speak for themselves. An example of the way he deals with what he observes is in the way he describes prayer. He says that others have described prayer in terms of its ritual components, and thus can think of prayer as a kind of formula; in other words, they treat prayer in the same way as they treat "magic." He says that a clearer understanding of Navajo praying comes from looking at prayer as a "pragmatic act"; that is, to look at praying in its context of participants and effects. It is plain that he is trying to provide a clearer understanding, and even from a personal perspective of having participated, but in the end his description of the "actions" involved in the practice of Native spiritual traditions ends up looking just like the descriptions of those who describe "prayer" as "magic."

Another example of writing where spirituality is connected to something else besides spirituality is in the collection edited by Vecsey and Venables (1980). Their contributors are interested in ecology and the environment, and so the writings are all in some way about how Native religious thought is

connected to the environment, and the consequences of that connection being *care* for the environment. The premises are (a) the "white" destruction of the Indian ecosystem; (b) that Indian religious is based on environmental harmony; and (c) that we should try to understand the basis of that connection in order to learn how to care for the environment.

Williamson (1984) cites archaeological evidence and descriptions of current spiritual practices and thought in order to discuss how Native Americans figure the literal cosmos, the sky and astronomical knowledge.

Indian Spiritual Thought: Writings About the Complex Whole

Several authors write about the belief systems of Indians. This may be from an anthropological perspective or from fields such as comparative religion. I was interested in what such works would have to say about Indian cultures' conception of the mind. There is quite a bit of literature in anthropology that deals with the "mind" in general terms, which was not reviewed because the purpose was to find writings specifically about Indian conceptions of the mind.

Anthropology has produced quite a bit of such literature. One of the earliest discussions is Powell's (1877). In a short monograph he wrote about traditional thought under the headings of cosmology, theology, religion, and mythology. From the standpoint of someone trying to find out about the Indian conception of the mind, his discussion would have to be called superficial. It focuses on ritual and exotic things. The model for what seems to be included is Western culture's religious categories, but there is nothing in the short book to even imply how Indian cultures might have considered "the mind" to be a part of spiritual thought or teaching.

Most of the later works do not provide much philosophical content either. Gill's (1982) book is fairly typical of a kind of introductory textbook to Indian religions. What you find in it is descriptions of symbols, ceremonies, and stories. Brown (1982) has published a less comprehensive book, but it is in many ways as superficial as the others. Its contents showed some promise to be more about religious *thought* than symbols and ceremonies, but it is still more or less at the level of describing exotic thought. One thing stands out that relates to the Elder's text in this study, and that is the author's own description of his Chapter 5, "Contemplation Through Action." He says the following about a

> central theme of probably all Native American life-ways and religious traditions which stands in contrast to most Western religions and experience, since these tend to dichomotize, to emphasize...an opposition between the domains of contemplation and action. By contrast, in the Native American world there generally obtains what may be called a unity of experience wherein actions of all orders serve as supports for contemplation, for the sacred is understood to be mysteriously present within all modes of

> action. It is perhaps this most important non-dualistic mode of experiencing and being that is very difficult for the non-Indian Western mind to comprehend. (pp. xi-xii)

His description of the chapter is not fulfilled, as the chapter itself is more about symbols and ceremonies than about the way Indian people think about such things.

A new book by Collins (1991) is organized along lines of culture area, and focuses upon the different aspects of the various tribal "religions." Again, it does not seem to incorporate much in the way of Indian people think about such things as "the mind," but again it is simple description of ceremony, ritual, and myth.

The one author who focuses on systems of religious thought is Åke Hultkrantz, a professor of comparative religion from Sweden who appears to have done extensive fieldwork. His book, *Belief and Worship in Native North America* (1981) is a collection of essays that is more like the works previously discussed. It is more of a sociology or anthropology of spiritual beliefs than some of his other work. He has written a book about studying American Indian religions, where he shows the history of the study (Hultkrantz, 1983), which does not bear directly on this work. A small book of his, *Native Religions of North America: The Power of Visions and Fertility*, provides a brief overview of religious thought (Hultkrantz, 1987). He is the one author who deals extensively with Indian ideas about the mind, in a major book *Conceptions of the Soul Among North American Indians* (1953). He discusses beliefs about "soul-dualism," and describes belief systems in which there are unitary souls, dual souls, and four souls. The multiple souls belief is particularly interesting, as he discusses "intellect-soul," "ego-soul," "breath-soul," "life-soul," and "free-soul," among others. He says that "free-soul" is more or less equivalent to "mind." It is not so much that he has the conceptions right or wrong; the point is that he raises these matters as being at the centre of Indian thought, and that is very unusual. He discusses the unity of "heart" and "mind" in this work as well.[2]

One of the reasons Hultkrantz seems to be more to the point than many others is that the other writers stop at the actual ritual, highlight the mechanisms of religious practice and results. This reduces Native religious thought to unimportance. Hultkrantz gets to the science of Indian spiritual belief. He compares and contrasts different ideas and brings them together—for example, in his statement that the Cheyenne believe in two souls, and the Shoshone believe in four souls. I do not know the specific nature of each tribe's beliefs in soul, but it would appear that to the extent that I know them,

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[2]I had Hultkrantz's *Native Religions of North America* (1987) on my desk and Elder Gordon Rain picked it up and read parts of it. He said that for the most part, what he read was fairly accurate. At one point he even said "Say, this is what I've been trying to tell some of you."

Hultkrantz is accurate. (It does seem, however, that he could just as easily speak of "aspects" of the soul instead of speaking of distinct souls.) He simply states the beliefs, and does not go on to try to arrive at grand conclusions, but puts his conclusions together in clear summary statements. He is analytic and synthetic in his approach. He sometimes cites the authority of individual Elders he has spoken with about particular issues, and so realizes that what is done in the description is "not for nothing." He discusses these things in a respectful manner.

Methods: Ways to Interpret Elders' Texts

There may be hundreds of ways to analyze texts. Ways of describing oral performance of stories has received quite a bit of attention. There are academic traditions of analysis of myth and legend.

Because there are so many alternatives, I returned to the research question for direction on whether or not to apply any of the many analyses to this text. The research question is one of interpretation: "How can this text, in Cree, be interpeted for an English-speaking audience that might not be familiar with Cree tradition?" Stated another way, the research question is "What does this text mean?" I limited my review to only work that would give me direction in interpretation of meaning.

Another issue I faced here is that this is a written text, written by an Elder who usually taught in face-to-face interaction. Not many authors have dealt with that issue. Ong (1986) looked at oral tradition put to writing in the transcription of the Gospel of Mark. In fact there are some similar issues, particularly as he discussed *context* for hearing or reading, and in his central concern of how context influences his question "What difference does a work's oral traditional character make to its responsible, informed interpretation?" (p. 150). His work was helpful in restating the question, but not in any direction as to how to do the work.

Linguistic structural analysis of narrative texts might have been promising, but it appeared to me that what I would get would be a description of the structure. The structure has meaning, but structure could not tell the meaning in the way that I knew that I must deal with it.

The field called "ethnopoetics" was appealing. Hymes (1977) promotes that as a way to discover meaning in Indian oral narrative. An example of that kind of work is in Dunn (1989), working with an account of first contact between Tshimshian people and Europeans. Examples of the reports of ethnopoetic analysis such as those included in Sherzer and Woodbury (1986) demonstrated to me that if I used that system my analysis would stay at the level of structural description. Even the idea that meaningful and deep aspects of culture could be explained by looking at certain discourse structures, as in the

way that myths are constructed, as in Urban's (1991) use of ethnopoetics in South American discourse, did not enlighten me as to an appropriate method. Ethnopoetics appears to me to be a valuable new way to look at Native American narratives, but it did not appear to suit the purposes of this study.

A thesis by Preston (1971) in anthropology of communication that appeared promising because it dealt with narratives and the self, in the context of James Bay Cree, but it was based on field work methods and provided no model for how to deal with text.

In the end, the closest precedent for this work is Cruickshank's work, noted in the foregoing sections. Three main aspects to her work appeared to me to be appropriate. In the first place, she lets the text speak for itself as much as possible. Second, her method is collaborative. Third, she and her collaborators begin their work with text by making a word-for-word translation, and then go over the work several times to make as clear as possible a connection between the Native language version and the English version. The word-for-word translation is an intermediate step, not a structural analysis. That is the technique I adopted.

For the the task of interpretation, I put forward some structural principles for understanding the narrative.

The literature I reviewed stands as a separate part of this thesis. Very little of it bears upon the question or the substance of the thesis.

CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction: Wholistic Understanding

Several years ago I felt a need to know my culture in a deeper, more meaningful way. I set out to approach an Elder using the protocol to obtain this information. That term, the protocol, refers to any one of a number of culturally ordained actions and statements, established by ancient tradition, that an individual completes to establish a relationship with another person from whom the individual makes a request. The protocols differ according to the nature of the request and the nature of the individuals involved. The actions and statements may be outwardly simple and straightforward, or they may be complex, involving preparation lasting a year or more. The protocols may often involve the presentation of something. It would be a mistake to say that what is presented is symbolic of whatever may be requested, or the relationship that it is hoped will be established, because it is much more than symbolic.

When I arrived at the doorstep of the Elder he invited me inside his home and gave me some tea. After we were seated and had had a short exchange about how nice the weather was and so forth, he asked me if there was anything I wanted to say. I presented tobacco and said the appropriate protocol. After doing this I told him that I wanted to know myself, my people, my history, my culture.

He accepted my request and began to pray with deep emotion.

After his prayer he proceeded to tell of how he had done the same thing that I was doing to another Elder when he was young. That Elder had told him that for one to approach knowledge one must understand the stages of knowledge.

The Elder than took a stick about 16 inches long from the ground a few feet away from where they were sitting on the grass. He then scratched a notch at about the middle of the stick, and then indicating one end of the stick and that notched mark said, "This is when you are born and this notch is 50 years old. In this area between being born up to 50 years of age, you do not know anything." He then proceeded to point from the notch at the middle of the stick to the other end and stated that from 50 years of age to 100 years of age you can say that you begin to have a hunch, an intuitive feeling, for knowledge. From 100 years of age and on, you then have entered an area, a stage in your life, where you know something.

I do not remember much after the Elder told me of his experience because that story had a strong impact within me and I have been intrigued by it ever since. I do know that it humbled me into having respect and awe within my culture, and certainly gave me a sense of pride and thankfulness in being an Indian.

Later in my life in my pursuit to know and to understand myself in relation to my culture I have come to realize—in part—the truth behind the story of the stick. It is as though every time I enter a doorway of information and knowledge, I discover that there are other doors that have to be entered. Upon entering those doors each door has many doors that have to be entered. I have also discovered that for every step in expanding my consciousness there has been growth that needed to occur.

In other words, for understanding to happen I needed to comprehend wholistically. I not only had to learn something intellectually, I had to learn it emotionally as well.

For this to happen, timing and synchronicity play a very important part in the regulation and realization of the entire process.

The Elder told me many other stories that were profound in the way he used metaphor to tell them. When I thought about the meaning of those stories and took into account that story of the stick, I knew that part of the mental and emotional work involved in understanding the complex systems of metaphor meant that I had to cut mentally across the barriers of time. The way that the Elder told the stories was a way of giving me information that would become knowledge if I thought about the stories in the right way. The stories were structured in such a way that each story's meaning got more and more complex and rich as I thought about it. The Elder knew that I was not ready to understand the deeper systems of meaning and could not take it all in at once, so he constructed the story so that its meaning would continue to unfold. It was not just the individual stories that did this, but the stories were all structurally related to each other, even though I did not necessarily realize that when each one was told. It is more than being "connected." As Jo-ann Archibald points out (personal communication), in a fundamental way it is all the same story. Knowing full well that their time on Earth was limited and that they had the responsibility of passing on the culture and the knowledge to the best of their ability, the Elders would tell these stories in metaphor, because they knew that for us to understand them would take time.

In retrospect, I see that as I think about the stories and discourses I have heard, I have begun to uncover some new sense of meaning in the stories, even after some of the Elders who told them to me have passed on. As the stories and discourses unfold their metaphor, I am in awe at the way that those Elders speak of the love they had for us, the compassion they had for our continued existence. This, they said, was the reason they would tell us the stories and these teachings, these truths. For this I am forever thankful.

Elder Louis Sunchild and The Text

Since my first encounter with the Elder and his stick story, I have come to know and consult with many Elders. Though all the Elders were truly helpful in the influence they had on my life, none stood out more than the late Elder Louis Sunchild. Perhaps it is because he not only spoke and wrote about truths, he also lived those truths every day of his life.

This thesis is focused upon a text written by the late Elder Sunchild. The text is about the need for people to understand the mind, that great care should be offered to it, that it must be understood that the source of existence is directly associated with the mind, that the achievement of balance and harmony, happiness and love, can be realized through the attainment of compassionate mind.

This may sound abstract or at least enigmatic, but the text is in fact about practical concerns, a prescription, if you will, of what to do and what not to do: the effects of substances and even thoughts that a person entertains, and how lifestyle effects mind and body. More important, and still in the realm of the practical, not the abstract, it is about how spiritual consideration of life itself interconnects with the compassionate mind.

The late Elder Sunchild wrote the text in the hope that it might truly help the people who read it and who read into it. This text is one part of a larger collection of writings the Elder undertook in the last years before he passed on. In all of the Elder's writing a remarkable trait is the sincerity of his desire truly to help all people, and particularly Indian children. This aspect of his writing was a part of him: his sincerity and love of life spilled over to the people he came into contact with in everyday situations. He was not above giving people a bear hug.

Many times it seemed to those of us who were privileged to know him and to hear him that Elder Sunchild was filled with endless, detailed, and comprehensive information and knowledge about Cree culture and language. In my own relationship with him he was neither didactic nor authoritarian. He gave me the honour and respect of requesting my opinions and asking me to express my thoughts on particular issues that I knew that he was concerned about.

During a period in the late 1980s, Elder Sunchild worked at Maskwachees Cultural College in Hobbema (Maskwachees), Alberta, as a resident Elder and writer of Plains Cree Syllabics. At the time I had developed a thesis project that would involve a survey study of Cree language competence amongst young children of Samson Plains Cree. That is an important area for research, but there was a more compelling question in my mind. I took that question to the Elder at Maskwachees College. He was not familiar with the concept or purpose of writing a thesis, but readily understood its significance and place in university studies. He agreed to work with me on a thesis project.

On different occasions, when asked a question, he would write out a response in Cree syllabics.

It was at the college one day that I asked him to write about the mind—to write about what, if anything, we should be concerned about in the understanding of the mind itself. My request was motivated by my desire from an educator's standpoint to find out what my culture says about the mind and the attainment of knowledge and information. I was hoping that the text that he agreed to write would help educators and that the way that we attempt to educate people might be influenced in a positive way by the premises and propositions that the Elder would incorporate in his text.

The Elder accepted my proposition and wrote a text about the mind, and perhaps because of the importance of the question, or its very basicness, he gave me the authority and responsibility of making it the foundation for this thesis. Elder Sunchild did not read or write English, and he employed traditional Cree thinking to express old teachings about mind, body and spirit. He wrote the text in Cree, using the Cree syllabic writing system. He also read from his prepared text and allowed me to make an audio-tape recording of him reading the text. I made a transcript in the Cree language, using both the tape recording and the written text. Then I made a literal translation from Cree to English, trying to the best of my ability to accommodate the Elder's teaching and lecturing style, as well as the stylistic expectations of English readers.

In the pursuit of knowledge, of understanding, of education, of learning, perhaps if we open our minds in a nonjudgmental way, a compassionate way, we may move towards improving our views, our perception of what the mind is and how thought is processed and more importantly how anything and everything effects our consciousness as human beings. It would seem that the Elders of North American cultures have something that they want us to know for our survival not only physically, but more importantly spiritually as well.

How do we move towards a life of balance and harmony with all of life for our wholistic survival? How do we become human once again? Perhaps some of those answers may be contained within this text by Elder Sunchild. Let us begin to look at what is being said in this text and, perhaps, what is not being said.

CHAPTER III: THE TEXT AND THE METHOD

The Syllabics Text

A transcription of the text, as written by the Elder in Cree syllabics, is presented here. Amongst the older generations who used this system there was quite a bit of individual variation in the way they wrote. Within the past 20 years, Cree teachers have worked on the syllabics writing system to standardize it. Elder Sunchild's use of syllabics reflects his age and the purposes for which he used the system. Readers of syllabics will note some differences from current standard use; for example. he usually did not include /h/ sounds in his writing.

ᒪᐢᑐᓄᒋᐣ

ᐊᐤ, ᐁᐊᐧᐠ ᐅᒪ ᓂᐅᐧ ᑭᑲᐧᐩ, ᐁᐃᐧᑕᓯᑕᒪᐣ. ᑕᓂᓯ ᐁᐃᑌᐧᒪᒃᑭᐠ ᒪᓀ ᐁᐃᑕᐸᑕᑭᐠ ᐁᐊᐧᑯᓂ ᑕᐣᓯᑐᑕᐠ ᐅᐢᓀᐣ ᐅᑦ ᕿᑭᓀ ᒃᓀᔦᐊᐧᑭᑦᑦ ᑕᒃᕿᐧ ᓀᓂᐢᑐᑕᑭᐠ ᑕᐸᐟᑭᑯᑦ ᐅᑌᓂᒃᐣ. ᒪᑕᒋᒃ ᓂᒃᐣ ᓂᒃᑕᓯᑌᐣ ᐅᒪ ᒪᑐᓄᐃᑕᒋᒃᐣ ᐁᐸᒃᒃᒥᓯᒪᒃᐠ ᑕᐸᑭᑯᑦ ᐅᑌ ᓂᒃᐣ. ᒪᒃ ᑯᐢᑕᐟ ᐊᐧᓯᓯᐧᓂᐧ ᑕᒪᓯᓯᕿᐟ ᐊᐧᐢᐢᐠ ᒪᓯᓯᕿᑦ ᑕᑭᒥᓯᑭᓯᓯᒃᓯᐧ, ᒥᓀ ᓀᒪᓄ ᓀᓀᑐᑭᓯ ᑕᒪᓐᑐᑕᑯᓯᐣ ᐁᐊᐧᑯᓂ ᐅᐃ ᐊᐸᑕᐊᐧᓂᓂ.

ᒪᑕᒃ ᓂᒃᐣ ᑭᓴᑌᐧᓄᐣ ᐅᒪ ᒪᑐᓄᔨᑕᒃᐣ ᐃᑕ ᕿᑭᓀ ᐁᐃᑕᑯᐠ ᒥᐢᑎᒃᐧᓂᐠᒥᑎᐠ.

ᐁᐊᐧᒃᓂᒪ ᑕᒃᕿᐧᕿᑭᓀᐅ ᐃᑯᐠ ᐁᒃᐢᑭᑕᐠ ᕿᐧᓄᐢᐠ ᐊᒥᓀᒥᑕ ᒥᐢᑎᒃᐧᐧᐣ. ᐊᐣ ᐁᒃᓄ ᐅᓄᐧᑦ ᒥᐢᑎᒃᐧᐧᐣ ᒥᓀ ᑕᒃᕿᐧ ᐊᐢᑌᑕᑕᐠ, ᕿᐧᔨᐢᐠ ᑕᓂᐸᐠ, ᑌᐸᑯᑦ ᐱᓯᒧᒃᐣ. ᑕᓂᐸᐠ, ᐯᓄᐠ ᑎᐱᐢᒃᐣ, ᐁᐊᐧᑯ ᓂᐢᑕᓀᐣ ᓀᐅᐧᔨᓄᐠ ᐊᑯ ᑕᓂᐸᐠ, ᓀᒧᓄ ᐊᐸᐊᐧᐠ. ᑕᐱᑕᐃᐧ ᐁᐊᐧᑯᓯᐟ ᑐᑕᒪᓂ, ᒃᓀᒃᓄᐢᕿᐟ ᒥᓀ ᑭᒃ ᒥᓓᒪᐅᐣ, ᒥᓀ ᑭᑕᐢᑎᐠ ᑭᓄᐣ, ᒥᑯ ᒥᓀ, ᒥᓀ ᑭᒪᒥᑐᓄᐃᑕᒃᐣ.

ᒪᒃ ᐊᐸᐊᐧᐠ ᓂᐸᓄᓂ, ᓀᒧᓄ ᒥᔨᐊᐧᐧ- ᒃᑭ ᑌᐱᒃᐧᒥᐣ. ᑕᒃᐸᐊᐧᐠ ᒃᑎᒥᓓᐁᐧᐃᑌᐣ ᑕᓂᐸᐠ. ᐊᑕ ᐱᐠᐃᐧᑯᐠ ᓂᐸᓄᓂ, ᑭᒃᓯᒥᒃᐧᓯᐣ ᐊᐧᑯᐧᐠᓂᓄᐠ ᒥᓀ ᓀᒪᓄ ᒥᓓᒪᐅᐣ. ᒪᒃᐊᐧᐃᐧᐸᐧ ᐊᐧᑯᐧᐠᓂᓄᐠ ᐱᐢᐠᐣ, ᒥᓀ ᑭᑕᐢᑎᐠ ᑭᓄᐣ, ᒥᓀ ᑭᒪᒥᑐᓄᐃᑕᒃᐣ.

ᑯᑌᐊᕆᓐᓇᐅᑦ. ᑭᒥᑯᑦ ᐊᓂᓪᓗᑦ ᐁᐊᓕᐅᓐ ᓄᑌ ᖃᓐᓴᓪᓗᑦ ᐃᓱᓕ.
ᐯᓐᑭᓐ ᑕᐊᓐᓐ ᑲᐃᓐᓕᓂᐅᑦ ᓕᐃᓐᓕᓂᐅᑦ ᑕᐱᒪᑯᑌᑦ ᑭᒥᑯ, ᐁᑲᓐ
ᑌᓱᒪᓂᒥᓂᐅᑦ ᑭᑎᑦ ᒥᓇ ᑭᑌ. ᐁᑲ ᐊᑲᓐᓴᑲᑦ ᑕᑲᖃᓐᑲᑯᓱᓂᐅᑦ,
ᒥᓇ ᐁᑲ ᐅᑦᑦ ᒥᓐᕆᐃ ᑕᑲᖃᓐ ᒪᐅᒪᒥᓄᐃᑕᒪᑦ. ᐁᑲ ᑐᑎᓇᒪᑦ
ᕆᒪᐅᑐᒥᖃᒪᑲᑭ ᑭᒪᒥᓄᓂᑲᓂᑦ. ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ ᒥᓐᕆᐃ ᕆᒪᐅᑐᕆᑦ
ᑭᒧᒥᓄᐃᒥᑲᑦ. ᓂᑲᑦ ᓂᑲᓂᑲᑦ ᐊᓐᑕᑦ ᑭᓐᖃ᙭ᐁᐃᓐᓴᑦ, ᒥᓇ ᑲᐱᑕᓐᑦ,
ᒥᓇ ᑲᓂᑦ ᓇᓇᑐᑦ ᖁᐅᑲᓐᓴᑦ ᐁᑯᓂ ᑭᑲᑐᑯᓂᑦ.

ᑭᒪᒪᑕᓐᓴᑦ, ᑭᑲᓐᑕᑲᒥᓂ ᐊᐅ ᑲᑭᑲᑭᒧᑎᓴᑦ, ᐊᐅ ᑲᑭᑲᑲᓂᐊᐃᓐ ᑕᐊᓐᓂᓂᐊᐃ
ᑭᑐᑌᑦ. ᓇᒧᓴᑭᑲᖁᐃᑐᑌᑦ ᑕᑭᑎᒪᐊᐃ ᑭᐊᓐᑯᒪᑲᑦ. ᐊᐅ ᐱᓵᓐᑦ
ᑭᑲ ᓂᕐᑕᑲᑦ. ᐊᐅ ᑲᑭᓂᕐᓂᓂ ᐊᐃᓐᑦᑦ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ ᐅᐃ ᑫᑎᓂᑲᑯᓂ.
ᒥᓇ ᒥᓐᕆᐃ ᐃᑯ ᐃᓐᑯ ᑕᑭᐱᓂᑲᓐᑎᓂ ᐊᕐᓂᓗ ᒪᑲ ᐅᐃ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ
ᐅᐃ ᐊᐸᒋᑕᒋ ᑲᒪᔭᑕᑭ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ ᑫᑎᓂᑲᑯᓂ. ᓇᒧᔭ ᒥᓇ ᑕᑭᖅᐃᑕᐸ
ᐃᓐᔭᑯ, ᓴᓐᑕᑯ ᑕᐱᓂᑲᓐᑎᓂ, ᐊᐅ ᐱᓵᓐᑦ ᑕᑕᑯᑕᐃᑯ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ ᐅᐃ
ᒥᓐᕆᐃ ᐊᐸᒋᑕᒋ ᑕᒧᔪᐊᓐᔭᑯ. ᐊᐅ ᑕᐁᓐᐱᓴᑯ ᐅᑕᐊᓐᓂᒥᖅ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ
ᐅᐃ ᓂᑯᑕᓐᑯ ᑕᑐᑕᑯᓂ ᑲᐸᒋᑕᓂ. ᐁᑯᓂ ᐁᑲᔭ ᑕᑭᓂᓴᑦ
ᐅᐃ ᑲᒪᓂᓇᐃᑲᑌᑭ. ᒥᖅᐊᓐᓂ ᐃᐱᓂᐅᑦ. ᑯᓂᑕ ᑕᑐᑦ ᑕᴐᓂᑦ
ᓴᓐᑕᑯ ᐅᓂ ᐁᐊᐸᒋᑕᓂ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ ᐊᐊᓴᐊᓐᑦ. ᒥᓇ ᑕᑭᑭᑯᓂᓂᓂ
ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ ᒥᓐᕆᐃ ᑭᑲᑐᑯᓂ.

ᒪᒥᐅᑐᒥᖃᒪᑲᑭ ᓇᓇᑐᑦ ᑌᓂ ᒥᓄ ᐊᐸᒋᑕᑯ ᐃᓐᑦ ᑎᐱᑦᐁᓐ ᐅᐅᓂᓂᑯ.
ᒪᒥᐅᑐᓇᑕ ᑕᓂᓂ ᑌᓂᓐᖃᑦᐁᐅᓂᓂ. ᒥᓇ ᑕᑲᖃᓐ ᒥᓐᖃᓐᐃᑕᑦ ᑕᓂᓂ
ᑭᑲᓐᓐᑦ ᑌᓂ ᑲᒥᑎᓇᑦ, ᑕᓂᓂ ᑌᑕᓐᖃᓂᓂ. ᒥᓇ ᐱᓵᓐᑦ ᐃᓐᐱᑦ
ᐃᓂᓂ ᑲᑭᓂᒪᓂᑦ ᑕᐃᓐᒥᐃᐅᓐᑦᓂᑦ. ᒪᑲ ᐁᓐᑦ ᒥᓇ ᐁᑲᔭ ᒪᓂᑕᐃᓐᑦᒪᓂᒧᓂᒥᓂ
ᓇᐊᓐᓂ ᐸᐸᑲᓇᑯ. ᑲᑲᑭᓐᓂᒥ ᒥᓐᕆᐃ ᐁᐊᐸᒋᑦ ᐁᐊᓐᑯᓂ, ᐃᑯᑦ
ᒪᒧᒪᐃᓐᓂᑦ. ᐊᐅᓐᑦ ᓂᓐᑕᑦ ᑯᑭᓂᑯᑦᑦ ᑲᐊᕐᓂᐃᐃᓐᓕᑦ ᐁᑯᓂ
ᐁᑭᓂᑯᑦᑦ ᑕᐸᑲᓇᐊᓐᓂᑦ ᐸᐸᑲᓇᑯ ᑕᑲᑭᓂᒪᑦ, ᑯᑕᐃᓇᑯ.
ᓇᐊᓐᓂ ᐁᐊᓐᑯ ᑭᓂᓐᑲᒪᒧᑲᑐᑦ ᑲᐸᐸᑲᓇᓐᓕᑦ.

ᐃᑕ ᑲᐃᓯᐯᐦᑐᑕᑲᐃ•ᐦᐣ ᑕᑲᑭᓯᑐᒪᑫᐦᐣ, ᓇᐊ•- ᐅᑌᐃᐧ ᐅᒋ ᐁᑲᑭᓯᒧᐟ, ᐁᑲᑭᑎᒪᑭᓯᒧᐟ, ᐁᐦᒋᑲᐊ•ᐱᐢᑕ ᐅᑲᑭᓯᒧᐃ•ᐣ, ᐁᐊ•ᑯ ᐊᑭᑌᐤ ᐅᑌᐃᐧ ᐅᒋ ᐁᑲᑭᓯᒧᐟ. ᐁᐊ•ᑯ ᓇᐊ•- ᑭᑲᐃᑕᐧ ᒪᓂᑐᐊ•. ᐁᑲ• ᐅᒪ ᕿᑌ•ᐧ ᐅᐣ ᑲᑭ ᕿ•ᐢᕿᒪᐤ ᐊᐦᑭᓂᐤ ᐃᑯ ᕃᒪᒪᑕᐊ•ᐧ ᐃᑭᐢᕿ•ᐃ•ᐣ ᒪᑎᑐᓇᐃᐟᒋᑲᐣ.

ᐊᐤ ᑭᐠ ᐁᑲ• ᑕᑲᕿ• ᓂᐢᑐᑫᒣᐣ ᐅᒪ ᒪᑎᑐᓇᐃᒋᑲᐣ ᑲᑕᐧᒋᑲᐧᐃᑌᐧ.
ᑭᐢᐱᐣ ᐁᐊ•ᑯᐦᐦᑯᐧ ᑕᓂᐧᑐᑕᐧ, ᐊᐃ•ᐦᐧ ᒥᐢᑕᐃ ᑕᓭᑐᑕᐧ ᒥᐧᐃᐃ•ᐧ ᑕᐧᐃᑯᐢᐁᐃᒪᐧᐣᐢᑕᐧᐃᐧᐣ ᑕᐧᐃᐢᑭᐦᑲᐧᐣ ᑕᐧᐃᑭᐦᐦᑯᐧ ᐅᑭᐦᐦᑯᐧ ᐅᑲᐧᐃᐢ

Tanipâhk, pêyak tipiskaw, ewako nîstanaw-newosâp pîsimohkân piko tanipâhk, namoya ayiwâk.
Tâpitawi ewakosîsi tôtamani(h), kânakâyâsken mina kika-mîyomahcihon, mina kitâstehtin kîyaw, mîhko(h) mîna, mîna kimamitonehicikan.

Mâka ayiwâk nipâyani(h), namoya misâwâc kakîhtêpihkwâmin.
Tahkayiwâk katimîweyihten tanipâyan.
Âta pikwîkohk nipayini(h), kika-sîmîhkwasin waniskayini(h) mîna namoya kasâpamahcihon.
Maka wâhwîpac waniskayini(h), kweyask tapimakotew kimihkoh.
Kite(h) ewako kweyask tâtoskêmakan namoya kôte-ahpinân.
Kimihkohk ayisk ewako kôhpimakotek kitêh kweyaskisih.
Pêskis tawâwâskawihtâyan tawîcîhtayan tapimakotek kimihkoh, êkwa tesimanâcihtâyan kiwitihp mîna kitê(h).
Êka-âkwâskam takakwe kahkisowâsîyan, mîna êka-osâm mistahi takakwe mayimamitonehitaman.
Êkatôtinaman tamâyitocikemakahki(h) kimâmitonecikanihk ewakoni mistahi tamâyitotaman kimamitonehicikan.
Nîkan nikanîkanastân kîskwêpewin, mîna kâpihtwâhk, mîna kanihk nanâtohk mêtâwêwna pêyakwan êkosi kika-tôtâkon.
Kika-macihtwân, kika-wâtakamisîn ahpo kâhki-kâkimotin, ahpo kahkî-kakayêsîhaw tawayesihat kitôtêm.
Namoya kikâyamehiten takitimahat kiwâhkômâkan.
Ahpo pîyisk kika-nipahtâkân.
Ahpo kâkî-nipayisiw awiyak ewakoni(h) ôhi kêtisikâkot.
Mîna mistahi îyikohk isko tâhkîpisikwâtisiw ayisîniw.
Mâka ôhi ewakoni(h) ôhi âpacihtâci(h) kâmâyâtahki(h) ewakoni(h) ketisikâkot.
Namoya mîna takihceyihtam wîyaw, na yestaw tâpisikwâtisiw, ahpo pîyisk tatakohtahikow ewakonih ôhi mistahi âpacihtâcih ta(h)mohcwâyâw.
Ahpo ta(h)wêpinew otawâsimisâh ewakonih ôhi nikotwâw tatotâkot kâmâyâtahki(h) tâpacihtat.
Êkosi êkâya(h) takisiwiskâk ôhi kâmasinahikâteki(h).
Misâwâc ekosi ehisipayik.
Konita tatôtahk tânwêtahk nêstaw ohci ehâpacihtât ewakoni(h) kôhânwehtahk.
Mîna tahkîkîkosowâsiw ewakoni(h) mistahi kîkway ôma.

Mâmitonehicikan nanâtohk tesi-mîyo âpâcihtaw wîya tipiyawe ayisiniw.
Tamâmitonehitahk tânisi esoskeyâcihot.
Mîna takakwe miskwehitahk tanisi kikway tesi kâhcitinahk, tanisi tetatoskêt.
Mina peyakwan ispihk isi(h) kâkîsimonihk tawîcihiwet.

Mâka wîya mîna e-kâyâh ta-manitowakeyimot nawac pâpakwanaw kâ-kâkîsimohk mistahi ê-âpatahk ewako, îyîkohk tamamâhtâwisihk.
Ayisk nistam koh-osîhikoyahk ka-ayisîniwîyahk ekosi ekî-isîhikoyahk tapakwanawâsîyahk pâpakwanaw takâkîsimoyahk, kohtawînaw.
Nawac ewako kisiskahtemakân kâpâpakwanomohk.

Ita kâ-isipeyimototâkawîyan takâkîsimôstamâkeyin, nawac otehihk ohci ekâkîsimot, ekâkitimâkimot, eyohcikawâpistah okâkîsimowin, ewako akîhtew otêhihk ohci ekâkîsimot.
Ewako nawac kîhkahihtâhk manitowa(h).
Ekwa ôma ketwehk ahpo kâhki kwêskehtamâw ayisiniw îkohk e-mamâhtawahk pîkiskwewin mâmitonehitcikan.

Hâw kîya ekwa tâ-kakwe nistohtaman oma mâmitonehicikan katasîcikâtek.
Kîspin ewakoyikohk tanisitohtahk, awîyak mistahi tamiyotôtahk misowîsih tamiskowehitâmâsiw tahto kîsikaw opimâtisiwinihk, mîna opimacihowinihk, mîna têsih manâcihtât.

The Translation

This translation was produced in several steps. First, I asked an Elder who has a knowledge of Plains Cree and a knowledge of the tradition to make a translation from the syllabics version. Elder Norman Yellowbird, who at the time was translator/transcriber for Maskwachees Cultural College, did this. Emma Lightning reviewed the text and produced the syllabics typescript. The next step was to audio-tape another on-the-spot translation, which I made for the benefit of a non-Cree speaker. For me as an individual, it helps me to focus in on the precise meanings and the correct translation if I am forced to make such a translation. As I made that translation I also made comments on the text, noting places where there was difficulty in the translation of Cree concepts. The final step in translation was to compare all the versions—syllabics, Cree Roman orthography, versions of the translations—and to refer back to the Roman orthography version and the audio-tape recording.

Right and left square brackets ([and]) enclose alternative translation terms in an attempt to provide a reader in English with the sense of the Cree meaning of the terms used.

Hear ye; it is this: four things that I will be talking about, as to what they [say, mean] and how they are applied [used].

It is for the young [adolescents or younger] to understand, particularly [those at an age level where they are beginning to understand abstractions and complexities], for them to try to understand, so that this understanding will benefit them in the future.

I will begin to talk first of all about the mind [consciousness], that possesses supreme awareness in a divine way; [it is pure intelligence].

The knowledge of this will benefit them in the future.

A person is afraid to do something wrong because if they do something wrong, they can be [jailed, locked away, detained, cut off for a long time].

As well, there is no life giving benefit for doing the things that I am going to point out.

But before I begin to identify these negative influences to the minds of individuals, I will first of all say that the mind, or the divine vehicle that processes and receives thought, is located within the brain.

It is therefore very important that great care should be given to the head area; the brain is divine and precious and great care should be given to ensure that the head that houses the brain should be protected from the cold.

Also that care should be taken in giving proper rest to the mind.

Out of a 24 hour period, 7 hours should be sufficient for the proper amount of sleep for resting the mind.

If you are consistent and disciplined in having the proper amount of sleep your body and mind will begin to adjust and to get used to this pattern.

This will result in good health; your body will be rejuvenated as well as your blood.

If you attempt to sleep longer than necessary, you will never have enough sleep.

This will only spoil your body as it will begin to like oversleeping.

When you wake up you will not be alert totally; you will dull your mind and senses.

You will feel slightly awkward physically as well.

In complying with this you have to rise early, usually before the sun rises.

Rising early has a profound effect on the heart and how it functions.

Your heart will beat properly, your blood will be [in proper condition].

You will not have heart disease.

It is the condition of your blood that affects the condition of the heart.

Also one must exercise for the purpose of helping your heart to beat well; this is attained through physical activity.

Again great care should be given to the head and the heart.

A person should not be constantly in an angry state, to not entertain bad thoughts.

Do not take anything internally that could do damage to your brain as well as your mind.

I will start off by pointing out what will do harm to your brain and mind.

First, there is alcohol, and then marijuana, injected drugs and drugs ingested.

These substances will do your brain and mind harm.

As well as this, there are also activities such as gambling of all sorts, that will have the same effect.

You will be mean and angry, you will be easily agitated and difficult to deal with [stubborn, unwilling to listen to reason].

You might also begin to steal; you might also begin to be deceitful and manipulate your friends.

You will not have remorse in doing harm to your relative[s].

Eventually you may arrive at the point of killing another;

even to the point of committing suicide—

all because of the effects of taking something into your system which effects your thinking, your perception.

Also another effect is that one may commit adultery because of the effects of exposing the mind to these things.

One will no longer possess the ability to respect and honour one's own body because that person will continue to commit adultery.

Eventually the person continuing to do these things that are harmful to one's consciousness will reach the point of being [mentally retarded or handicapped, crazy, in a disturbed state, institutionalized], unable to control their life, unable to control their mental functions; one who is owned by the things I am talking about, that person does not function as a human being [i.e., sick minds, as of the insane, not realizing what madness is, an individual who is not centred within himself or herself].

In other words they are no longer human because the do not posses the compassionate mind.

These individuals will throw away their children [family break ups].

All because of the effect of any one of these things that are not good.

So in saying these truths I urge that the person reading these written words not let [the reading of it] anger them.

Because it is just the way it is.

Should a person dispute what I am saying it is because that person is involved in any one of these things and is trying to justify their action.

A person has within the ability to use the mind in a good way.

A person should try to be [be zealous to be] creative in their thinking in finding was of getting a livelihood (bread and butter).

Equally important in this pursuit of a good life is having a strong spiritual life.

To involve oneself in prayer and ceremony.

However to pursue spirituality through a humble means, to exercise humility and compassionate mind.

Not to act or behave as if one is in possession of supernatural abilities.

It is better [to act] from the humble state of knowing nothing which really and truly benefits [is useful to] a person, rather than to possess supernatural abilities.

Because in the beginning when God created humanity, God intended us to be humble and to approach everything in a humble way.

Elders say that what counts is the sincere prayer that is said from the heart.

A prayer said with deep emotion where one will have tears.

Now this what we are saying concerning the mind which is life [aliveness] and the spoken word which is life-giving, and the both having divine life giving power; [they] can be used in sharing the knowledge of these truths to others and moving [inspiring] them to change their lives because of it.

So now you should try to understand this compassionate mind.

Even if a person understands a portion of what was discussed, then it is of benefit, that much more, to that person.

A person will entertain and process new thought and insights into life every day, as well as in their own livelihood.

A person will do themselves good if they respect their mind.

Just the realization of that miraculous nature of the mind is something to think about.

Even the Creator used thought, mind consciousness, to create all that is seen.

Because of the awesome nature and power of the mind, it is only right that it be given the utmost respect and reverence.

If a person had something less than what is blessed in mind potential to all, then that person cannot hope to survive or at least to function effectively.

[There are modern means of helping addicted people, ultimately hoping to dry out a patient long enough for that patient to pray in a sober state of mind.]

A person will benefit tremendously for the afterlife by following these truths toward life.

When a person passes on in this life, he only dies bodily.

The mind and spirit continues to exist and live.

As an individual, speaking on my own behalf, I do not have anything to be considered better than others.

I am only a person who knows nothing.

There are other effects that I did not mention earlier that I will mention.

This concern I have, of this being a global problem, is certainly evident in the physical manifestations of the abuse of the mind.

There is disease that developed because of this, and some of these are diseases of the bones, loss of hearing, insanity, blindness.

One should not feel that these are meant for any specific individual but rather that this is a concern that affects all humanity.

For generation upon generation since time immemorial our people have taught these human truths and principles for the holistic survival of everyone.

How to Deal With the Text

The objective is to discuss the meaning of the text. During the course of translation, some new meanings and new shades of meaning of what the Elder was saying began to emerge.

There are many ways of analyzing texts established in linguistics, anthropology, and literary criticism. Those kinds of analysis would be interesting, and it is possible that some aspect of the text that would otherwise be hard to see would be the product of those kinds of analysis. Several techniques were explored, to see if they would add to understanding of the text. Some of those techniques are brought up in Part II of this thesis.

As interesting as it would be, I could not provide a linguistic analysis of the text, because that would focus on the structure, and my task is to focus on meaning. The linguistic structure is the foundation for the meaning, and sometimes it is necessary to point out how shades of meaning are based on syntactic structure. A related linguistics technique would have been analysis of discourse structure, or text structure. Once again, the level of explanation would stay at the structural level. One of the reasons I have provided the Cree versions in both syllabics and Roman orthography, and the translation, is so that others who have the competence and skills can find meaning in this text,

but I would be wrong to profess that I have the skills to do that, and that is not the intent of the work.

The intent of the Elder was that this text be presented because some people might find it helpful as they work with other people, especially children, and especially in education. What I must do in that case is to let the text speak for itself for those who might find it helpful. My task is not to provide a structural analysis of the text, but to discuss the text itself in a way that helps people understand it, that contributes to meaning.

The technique that I settled upon was to take each Cree word (or sometimes word cluster) and provide an English translation for that term. Then I made a comment on the contextual meaning of each pair (the Cree word or cluster and the English translation).

It might be according to academic convention to say that I followed the same technique as Cruickshank, discussed in Part II of the thesis, but it is honest to say that I had that work entirely completed by the time I found reference to her work with Mrs. Gertie Thom, where she said they record Elders "in the Tutchone language, then carefully transcribing her tapes. Then she and I begin a scrupulous word-by-word translation of the story, and when we have completed that we rework our verbatim translation into standard English" (Cruickshank, Sidney, Smith, & Ned Ned, 1990, p. 17). That is exactly what I had done.

One other aspect of Cruickshank's and her collaborators' work has to be mentioned, and that is collaboration itself.

After the word-by-word translation was completed, my collaborator and I went over the text many, many times, while he asked questions and I responded. Cruickshank says this about stories:

> Our collaboration has been and continues to be a source of enormous enjoyment for all of us. Storytelling does not occur in a vacuum. Storytellers need an audience, a response, in order to make the telling a worthwhile experience. They have patiently trained me to understand conventional indigenous literary formulae so that I can *hear* stories told mostly in English sprinkled with place names, kinship terms, clan names, and personal names in Tagish, Tlingit, and Southern Tutchone. Telling stories in their own languages to someone who cannot understand the subtleties is like talking to a blank wall. Furthermore, they are excellent teachers, and when they tell me a story, they do so to explain something else to me. The whole rationale for telling them disappears if I cannot understand what they are trying to teach. (Cruickshank et al., 1990, pp. 16-67)

Cruickshank's description of this aspect of collaboration reflects my own need in this case to collaborate. As in the translation into the tape recorder, when I was in the position of having to explain to someone, and then to think with someone, about the meaning of the text, it was much more productive.

That is not an accidental discovery. That kind of collaboration has a long history. The collaboration is in fact "the indigenous mind in action." In Cree terms, this may be expressed "maskikiw mâmtonehicikan," which reflects that in thinking, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

In fact, the conclusion of the thesis relies on a dialogue. I gave my collaborator a list of topics in preparation for tape recording a relatively formal dialogue, which was transcribed and forms the last part of the thesis.

CHAPTER IV: WORD-FOR-WORD TRANSLATION

As Cruickshank and her collaborators (Cruickshank et al., 1990) found with Athabaskan narratives, it appeared that the best way to produce a translation that would make this text accessible to English speakers was to take as a first step the production of a word by word (or word cluster) translation. The several strategies that were attempted with this text, previously discussed, all contributed to the translation produced for this thesis.

The word-for-word translation is shown in the following columns. Each word is numbered in the first column, for ease of reference.

In the second column, the Cree word used by the Elder is shown in sequence. Note that in some cases the pronunciation of the word differs from the Cree and Plains Cree pronunciation in other parts of Alberta. The Cree at Hobbema and Sunchild Reserves, in Alberta, and Rocky Boy Reservation, in Montana, is quite similar. Elder Sunchild spoke that way and in this version I have tried to represent that. The variation from other Plains Cree speech is minor, in most cases simply the /h/ sound, or aspiration. In the representation of the Elder's Cree speech, in cases where that /h/ sound differs from other varieties of Plains Cree, I have indicated the variation by showing the "h" in parentheses. In the very few cases where the Elder's Cree is emended to a kind of regional standard Cree, the emendations are shown in bold.

Under each Cree term appears an abbreviation, using generally the system provided by Hunter and Karpinsky (1992, pp. viii-ix) of abbreviations for grammatical classification and parts of speech.

Abbreviation	Part of Speech
AI	animate intransitive verb
DEM PRON	demonstrative pronoun
EXPR	expression
INDEF PRON	indefinite pronoun
LOC	locative
NA	animate noun
NI	inanimate noun
PART	particle
PERS PRON	personal pronoun
PREV PART	preverbal particle
TA	transitive animate verb
TI	transitive inanimate verb
II	inanimate intransive verb
1	first person singular (animate)
1P	first person plural (animate)
2	second person singular (animate)
2I	second person inclusive (animate)
3	third person singular proximate animate

3'	third person obivative singular/plural animate
0	inanimate proximate singular
OP	inanimate proximate plural
O'	inanimate obviate singular
O'P	inanimate obviate plural
SUBJ MODE	subjunctive mode
CONJ MODE	conjunctive mode
INDEF ACT	indefinite actor form
REDUP	reduplicative form
NEG MKR	negative marker
INTERR PRON	interrogative pronoun
SING	singular
PLURAL	plural
SUB	subject
FUT	future tense

The third column is an English gloss term, or indication of function. In the case of verbs, the meaning is usually given for the Cree stem, as for the infinitive.

The fourth column expands the meaning, in context, of the English gloss.

No.	Cree Term	English Term	Explanation
1	Haw, ewakôma [*Haw*=EXPR, *ewakôma*=INDEF PRON]	this, specifically	draws attention to importance of the subject matter
2	newo [PART]	four	spiritual, sacred number; implies "fourness" of nature; implies interconnectedness of Cree humanity
3	kîkway [INDEF PRON]	something, thing	special attention drawn to following subject matter, with emphasis on its domain
4	e-wîtasihtamân [TI, CONJ MODE, 1]	I am going to elaborate on or about	high vocabulary; used to imply the importance of issue or matter to be discussed
5	tânisi [EXPR]	what, how	depending on context, term is used to indicate what and/or how

6	ehitwemakahki(hk) [NI]	what it is saying, what they mean	depending on context, term is used to indicate communication of meaning, not necessarily limited to written or oral communcation
7	mîna [PART]	and, also	can also be used to request more of something, or to mean "in addition to"
8	ehitâpatahki(hk) [NI]	how they are used	indicates usage or usefulness of subject
9	ewakoni(h) [INDEF PRON]	those	refers to concepts, ojbects, or a category of things or issues
10	tanisitohtahk [AI, CONJ MODE, 3]	(he) will understand, comprehend	to become in a state of awareness and knowledge
11	oskayâh [NA]	youth	generally refers to category of adolescent age or younger
12	ohci [PART]	for, on behalf	for the benefit of, or in respect to
13	kehcinâ [PART]	especially for, for sure	referring to a specific purpose or category; also used to indicate the importance of something, and relates to truth (sureness)

14	kânayawacikicik [NA, 3PL]	youth, usually between approximately 11-17 years	term is applied descriptively to youth that are at the stage of beginning to understand more complicated and complex concepts and indigenous thought; at the very most the youths may not fully comprehend, but will retain information for later consideration, so metaphors are used by way of example
15	takakwe [PREV PART]	to try to	to make an effort at a task that may require thought and/or action
16	nanistohtahkik [TI, REDUP, 3PL]	to understand	to understand, to comprehend, to be aware
17	tâpacihikocik [TI, PL, CONJ, 3P]	they will benefit from it	descriptive term to mean, literally, "to be aware of"
18	ôte nîkân [PART]	in the future	indicates future but not specific in terms of measurable time; a general statement to indicate the future
19	mâcika(h) [PART]	to start with	used to indicate the start of something of importance
20	nîkân [PART]	the first, or start, future	can be used to indicate future, as well as "first," or "start," or "head" (as in "beginning"); (context makes it easily understood)

21	nikatasihten [*nika*=1P, SUB MKR, *tasihten*=TI]	I will elaborate, discuss, talk, speak about	indicates speaking to a specific issue, issues, or concepts, of a specific nature or category; (in other words, it does not refer to meaningless talk)
22	ôma [DEM PRON, INANIMATE SING]	this	is used to indicate a point or direction (to bring to focus, or attention, or in-isolation-yet-interconnected)
23	mâmitonehicikan [NI]	mind, thought process	ability to ponder, think, or process thought, as well as to be conscious, or to refer to consciousness in its totality
24	e-pakâhkamisîmakâhk [II, CONJ MODE]	it possesses high consciousness and awareness	a term used to describe the divine nature of something that has the ability, or gift, to be pure in awareness, intellect, and power; to be of high or supreme consciousness
25	tâpatcîkocik	refer to #17	refer to #17
26	ôte [PART]	"over here" or "this way"	over there or here; points at a point or in a direction
27	nîkân	refer to #20	refer to #20
28	mâka [PART]	but, however, therefore	can be used as conjunction in a sentence
29	kostam [TI, 3]	he/she is afraid, or fearful of it	used to indicate apprehension due to fear of consequences

30	ayisîniw [NA]	human	human being, general
31	tamayisîciket [AI, 3, CONJ]	to do wrong, to err in action or behaviour	term literally means to do wrong through some act
32	ayisk [PART]	because	used in connection with other words in explaining cause and effect
33	mayisîcikecih [AI, FUT, 3, SUBJ MODE]	the act of doing wrong (future tense)	is used here to mean "if one does wrong," the results of doing wrong
34	tahki [PREV PART] misikipayikasiw [AI, 3]	could be locked away, as in "incarcerated"	to be cut off or closed to something, or to be detained for a period of time, such as being jailed
35	mîna [PART]	and	used to say "as well as" or "in addition to"
36	namoya [NEG MKR]	no, not, do not, cannot	not, or to disapprove of
37	nanâtohkisih [PART]	all sorts of ways, different ways or methods, variety	indicates a general variety within the framework of what is being discussed
38	tamîyotôtâkoyan [TI, 2, FUT]	it does good to oneself, achieves positive results benefitting self	explains positive effects or results, to one's own self; positive effects to one's physical, emotional, spiritual and mental well being
39	ewakoni [DEM PRON, PL, NI]	refer to #9	refer to #9

40	ôhi [DEM PRON, INANIMATE PLURAL]	these	to point to something (plural); indicates more than one of a set or category
41	âpacihtâyini(h) [TI, SUBJ MODE]	if you use it	meaning "to use or to practise" something
42	mâcika [PART]	refer to #19	refer to #19
43	nîkân [PART]	refer to #20	refer to #20
44	kîyêtwêyân [AI, 2]	I will say	to speak or to make a statement
45	ôma [DEM PRON, INAN]	refer to #22	refer to #22
46	mâmitonehicikan	refer to #23	refer to #23
47	ita [PART]	where	used to indicate the precise and specific point
48	kehcinâ(h)	refer to #13	refer to #13
49	e-ihtakohk [INDEF PRON]	where it exists	refers to where [it] exists or is located
50	mistikwânihk [NI, LOC]	the location of the head	"head" plus locative suffix
51	mîtihpihk [NI, LOC]	in, or within, the brain	"brain" plus locative suffix
52	ewakwânima [INDEF PRON]	that is one	a compound word, points to a source or focal point
53	takakwe [PREV PART]	refer to #15	refer to #15
54	**ta**kehcinâhohk [AI, INDEF ACT, FUT]	to be sure	without doubt, with faith

55	îyikohk [PART]	up to, when it is the amount	up to the limit, as in effort, or point when [it] is at its zenith
56	e-kaskîhtahk [TI, INDEF ACT]	to finish or achieve a task	indicates how one can achieve up to the potential or one's ability; effort is required for task
57	kweyask [PART]	to do well or to do something true, as in straight	to do [it] well, and depending on circumstance, to do well with consideration of protocols
58	**ta**paminamihk [TI, INDEF ACT]	to handle or operate	handling or operating something with the exercise of care
59	mîstikwân [NI]	the head	the head
60	ahpô [PART]	and, or, perhaps	can also mean "as well as" or "in addition to" or "perhaps" or "due to"
61	ekaya [NEG MKR, CONJ MODE]	not, don't	means not, or do not, or to avoid doing
62	osâm [PART]	too much, because, resulting	the meaning in this text is "too much" or "more than necessary"; term changes depending on context
63	mistahi [PART]	a lot, extensive amount	term indicates a large amount
64	takawatihtahk [TI, INDEF ACT]	to expose to cold condition	indicates exposure to cold conditions, as from weather
65	mistikwân	refer to #59	refer to #59
66	mîna	refer to #35	refer to #35

67	takakwe	refer to #15	refer to #15
68	e-âstehtatahk [TI, INDEF ACT]	to cause to rest or to relax	indicates causing to rest, or to effect some rest, meditative relaxation
69	kweyask	refer to #57	refer to #57
70	tanipâhk [AI, INDEF ACT]	to sleep	to sleep
71	têpakohp [PART]	the number seven	seven
72	pîsimohkân [NA]	a watch, or clock, or unit of time measured by the clock	term originally derived from measurment of time through position of the sun; indicates measurement of time by the clock; in this case, in hours
73	tanipâhk [*ta-*=FUT, *nipâ*=AI, *hk*=INDEF ACT ENDING]	refer to #70	refer to #70
74	pêyak [PART]	the number one	measures one unit of something
75	tipiskâw [II]	it is night	night
76	ewako [INDEF PRON]	that one	term is meant to emphasize a point of focus
77	nîstanaw-newosâp [PART]	the number 24	the number 24
78	pîsimohkân	refer to #72	refer to #72
79	piko [PART]	only	only; have to; for sure; without a doubt
80	tanipâhk [INDEF ACT, FUT]	refer to #70	refer to #70

81	namoya	refer to #36	refer to #36
82	ayiwâk [PART (DEGREE OF COMPARISON)]	more than (with "namoya" is "not more than)	indicates not going over the limit or not going beyond
83	tâpitawi [PART]	as often as possible (descriptive), continuously	indicates being in the process of disciplining or conditioning through action of something; establishing a pattern, consistently
84	ewakosîsi [PRON, A BALANCED FORM]	that is how it is done (that's how)	a two-word term, joined to indicate that which is done, as in action resulting in an outcome; term changes meaning depending upon context
85	tôtamani(h) [TI, SUBJ MODE]	if you do it	indicates something that is, or should be, done; or to actually cause to do
86	kanakâyâsken [TI, FUT, 2S]	you will be used to it, or will become accustomed to it	indicates result of becoming conditioned through disciplined practise; pattern is set and you become one with it
87	mina	refer to #35	refer to #35
88	kikamîyomahcihon [*ki*=FUT MKR, *ka*=SUB MKR, *mîyomahcihon*=AI]	you will achieve health or well being	term indicates a state of well being or healthy condition, or harmonious, balanced state
89	mîna	refer to #35	refer to #35
90	kitâstehtin [II, FUT]	it will rest	term indicates restful state (future)

91	kîyaw [NI 2]	your body	(your) physical body
92	mîhko(h) [NI]	blood	blood
93	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
94	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7 (repeated)
95	kimamitonehicikan [NI, 2]	refer to #23	refer to #23
96	mâka	refer to #28	refer to #28
97	ayiwâk	refer to #82	refer to #82
98	nipâyani(h) [AI, SUBJ MODE, 2S]	if, or when, or whenever you sleep	term indicates future tense, or "if you sleep"
99	namoya	refer to #36	refer to #36
100	misâwâc [PART]	because, or anyway, anyhow	specifically means "will result in" or "because" or "due to"
101	kakîhtêpihkwâmin [*kakîh*=PREV PART, *têpihkwâmin*=AI, 2]	PREV PART=can, able; AI=you will not have enough sleep	indicates "can/will have enough sleep" or "will feel rested or in a balanced state" (negated by term #99)
102	tahkâyiwâk [PART]	more than, or add on to more than necessary	refers to a process of "doing more than" over a period of time, or adding on to through the doing to excess
103	katimîweyihten [TI, FUT, 2]	you will begin to like or condition yourself; become accustomed to	indicates liking something, without judgement of the nature of it; a person can think they like something because it occupies their mind, as in a form of escaping from the truth

104	tanipâyan [AI, 2, FUT]	to sleep	"if you sleep"
105	âta [PART]	even, even if, although	used emphatically for "even" or "although;" meaning can change depending on context
106	pikwîkohk [PART]	at any level, extent; as in "amount of"	in this text, contextual meaning is illustrative of the amount, excessive
107	nipayini(h) [AI, 2, SUBJ MODE]	if you sleep	can also mean "when you sleep" or "whenever you sleep" or using sleep as an example
108	kika-sîmîhkwasin [AI, 2]	you will be half asleep, or being unalert due to sleep	a specific condition of a person associated with sleep: over-restful or unrestful
109	waniskayini(h) [AI, SUBJ MODE, 2]	when you arise or wake up after sleep	specific, literal description of rising up from lying down; more often used to mean "upon waking up after sleep"
110	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
111	namoya	refer to #36	refer to #36
112	kasâpamahcihon [AI, 2, FUT]	you won't feel anything	indicates total state of well being associated with rest and sleep; root indicates thoroughness in mind and body
113	mâka	refer to #28	refer to #28
114	wâhwîpac [PART, REDUP]	soon or early	soon, early; right away; also can mean repetitively early

115	waniskayini(h)	refer to #109	refer to #109
116	kweyask	refer to #57	refer to #57
117	tapimakotew [II, FUT]	it will function, run	implies movement by itself, as the pumping of the heart
118	kimihko(h) [NI, 2]	your blood	your blood
119	kiteh [NI, 2]	your heart	your heart
120	ewako	refer to #76	refer to #76
121	kweyask	refer to #57	refer to #57
122	tâtoskêmakan [II, FUT]	it will work	term implies functioning on its own power, as with the heart
123	namoya	refer to #36	refer to #36
124	kôte-ahpinân [AI 2]	you will have heart disease	unhealthy condition of the heart; heart disease
125	kimihkohk (NI LOC 2)	refer to #118	refer to #118
126	ayisk	refer to #32	refer to #32
127	ewako	refer to #76	refer to #76
128	kôhpimakotek [II, FUT]	a reason for its functioning or running well	descriptive term, meaning running or movement
129	kitê(h)	refer to #119	refer to #119
130	kweyaskisi(h) [PART, A BALANCED FORM]	emphasis to do well or properly	implying doing well; *-isih* suffix used to emphasize wellness or trueness, as in straight
131	pêskis [PART]	to separate, individually, apart	addition to, add on something to benefit

132	tawâwâskawihtâyan [TI, FUT, 2]	to move around physically or cause to move bodily	indicates physical movement, such as exercise, activity, or physical work
133	tawîcîhtayan [TI, 2]	to help it	implies helping something along, to work together to support something, as in your blood flow
134	tapimakotek [II, FUT]	it will run, or it will function as in continuous; consistency	can refer to #117 but also implies continuity of movement
135	kimihko(h)	refer to #118	refer to #118
136	êkwa [PART]	also, as well as, and	in this context simply means "also" or "as well as" but term's meaning changes depending on context
137	tesimanâcihtâyan [TI, FUT, BALANCED FORM, 2]	to be respectful of, to take great care of	respect, to respect something through the care afforded it
138	kiwitihp [NI 2]	your brain	your brain
139	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
140	kitê(h)	refer to #119	refer to #119
141	êkâ-âkwâskam [PART, NEG MKR, CONJ MODE]	not, for sure; or not, definitely	a two-word term, with first word meaning "not," second word means "for sure" or "definitely" or "without a doubt"
142	takakwe [PREV PART]	refer to #15	refer to #15
143	kâhkisowâsîyan [AI, REDUP, 2]	to be angry	to be angry; to be in a state of anger
144	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7

145	êka-osâm [PART, NEG MKR, CONJ MODE]	not too much, not too excessive	two-word term: *not* and *tɔɔ much*; contextual variation in meaning
146	mistahi	refer to #63	refer to #63
147	takakwe [FUT PART]	refer to #15	refer to #15
148	mâyimamitonehitaman [TI, PREV PART, 2]	you are not to think negatively	process of entertaining negative thoughts, such as hateful or violent thoughts towards someone
149	êkatôtinaman [TI, NEG MKR, CONJ MODE, 2]	you are not to take or expose to	two-word term, combining "not" and "to take into system," such as ingesting a substance; depending on context, can also mean "internalize"
150	tamâyitocikemakahki(h) [II, FUT PREV, PL]	they will cause to damage	refers to results of action causing damage or destruction
151	kimâmitonecikanihk [LOC, 2]	in your mind	mind and consciousness; here, "in your mind"
152	ewakoni [INAN PRON PL]	those (refer to #9)	points to a category of things
153	mistahi	refer to #63	refer to #63
154	tamâyitotaman [TI, FUT, 2]	you to do wrong	"to do negative things of no life-giving benefit"
155	kimâmitonehicikan [NI]	your mind	your mind, your consciousness
156	nîkân	refer to #20	refer to #20

157	nikanîkan [PART, FUT, 1]	I will put first and foremost	placement, usually in terms of importance of something that needs to be put forth and dealt with first, for a special reason
158	astân [157 & 158 together are one word, TI, VERBALIZED]	to place, or to put on the table (so to speak)	[subject marker is missing from this verb]; implies the act of placing something down, usually to illustrate, or to be seen for a purpose
159	kîskwêpewin [NI]	intoxication through the drinking of a substance	implies numbness of senses, disorientation, confusion, chaos and dizziness associated through the drinking of a substance
160	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
161	kâpihtwâhk [AI, FUT, INDEF ACT]	to smoke	term implies the smoking of marijuana or other forms of narcotic substance; no specific subject, so "everyone is included" or "doing the action"
162	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
163	kanihk [PART]	[particle] by the way, or not to mention, or incidentally	difficult term to translate; its use in a phrase indicates almost forgetting something, and indicating this
164	nanâtohk [PART]	all sorts of ways, different kinds	term usually implies an assortment of ways or kinds, usually within a category

165	mêtâwêwina [NI PL]	games, or category of games	in this context term implies games usually associated with gambling, such as poker, bingo, etc.
166	pêyakwan [PART]	same (thing)	implies duplication of unit or thing, doubling
167	êkosi [PART]	that is the way of it; so; therefore	term is usually used to end a phrase, sentence, or statement; meaning is contextually variable
168	kika-tôtâkon [TI, FUT, 2]	it will do to you; it will affect you	"it" (neutral in terms of negative or positive influence) will affect you
169	kika-macihtwân [AI, FUT, 2]	you will be mean	you will be mean
170	kika-wâtakamisîn [AI, FUT, 2]	you will be stubborn, easily angered	stubborn, unwilling to listen to reason
171	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
172	kâhki-kâkimotin [PREV PART + AI, 2]	possibly (or likely) you will steal	two-word term, first element means "possibly," second term is "steal"
173	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
174	kahkî-kakayêsîhaw [*kahkî*-=PREV PART, *KAKAYÊSÎHAW*=TA 2ND TO 3RD PERSON]	possibly (or likely) you will deceive him or her	two-word term, first element means "possibly," second term is "you, using deception"
175	tawayesihat [TA, FUT, CONJ MODE, 3]	to cheat him or her	cheating, as through lies, deception, manipulation

176	kitôtem [NA, 2]	your friend	culturally your friend is to be respected; term implies this position of respect and honour, such as with a close, dear friend; term also has sacred significance
177	namoya	refer to #36	refer to #36
178	kikâ-yimehiten [*kikâ*-=FUT, 2; *yamehiten*=TI]	you will not think or consider it difficult or hard	term is used in connection with "thought of something difficult"; after assessing something through thought, you do not have difficulty to act
179	takitimahat [TA, FUT, 3]	to make or to cause another wrong through some act	term implies more than just to do another wrong, but that the act causes extreme hardship in most cases to another
180	kiwâhkômâkan [NA, 2]	your relative	term implies relative as in both immediate and extended family
181	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
182	pîyisk [PART]	eventually	eventually
183	kika-nipahtâkân [(*kika*=FUT, 2; AI]	you will kill or commit murder	kill, cause death, commit murder
184	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
185	kâkî-nipayisiw [(*kâkî*-=PREV PART, 3); AI]	possibly or likely a person will take his or her own life	the taking of one's own life
186	âwîyak [PRON]	someone	someone, an individual

187	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
188	ôhi	refer to #40	refer to #40
189	kêtisikâkot [TI, FUT, 3]	it will affect him/her in this way	implies the affecting of something, causing one to act, think, or behave in a certain way
190	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
191	mistahi	refer to #63	refer to #63
192	îyîkohk [PART]	to the point of, to the extreme, or the amount of	taking something to its zenith or extreme; to cause a further reaction
193	isko [PART]	to that end	to that end; to the limit
194	tâhkî- [PREV PART] pisikwâtisiw [AI, 3]	possibly or likely, a person engages in adultery	two-word term; "possibly" or "likely" is first term; second word is "engage in a adultery"
195	ayisîniw	refer to #30	refer to #30
196	mâka	refer to #28	refer to #28
197	ôhi	refer to #40	refer to #40
198	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
199	ôhi	refer to #40	refer to #40
200	âpacihtâci(h) [TI, SUBJ MODE, 3]	if one will use it when, whenever	term implies "*if* one uses it"
201	kâmâyâtahki(h) [NI, PL]	things that are not good"	things that are not good" or "things that do not benefit a person"
202	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
203	kêtisikâkot	refer to #189	refer to #189
204	namoya	refer to #36	refer to #36
205	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
206	takihceyihtam [TI, FUT, 3]	he/she will not respect and honour	implies respect, honour, care; to hold dearly and in high esteem

207	wîyaw [NI, 3]	his/her body	a person's physical body
208	nayestaw [PART]	all the time, often, always	repetitive, as for repetitive urges or repetitive action
209	tâpisikwâtisiw [AI, FUT, 3]	he/she will engage in adultery	to engage in adultery
210	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
211	pîyisk	refer to #182	refer to #182
212	tatakohtahikow [AI, REDUP, FUT, 3]	it will take him to the point or will be taken to the point	indicates that something will take him or her to the point or will be taken to arrive at, or to a point of
213	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
214	ôhi	refer to #40	refer to #40
215	mistahi	refer to #63	refer to #63
216	âpacihtâci(h)	refer to #200	refer to #200
217	ta(h)mohcwâyâw [AI, FUT, 3]	he/she will be crazy or in a disturbed state	term implies a state of irrationality, disturbed, such as a person who is insane; person may behave in an inhumane way
218	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
219	ta(h)wêpinew [TA, FUT, 3]	he/she may, or will throw away or discard and disown	throw away, leave and discard, disown
220	otawâsimisâ(h) [NA PL]	his or her own children	implies divorce, or breakup of own family
221	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
222	ôhi	refer to #40	refer to #40
223	nikotwâw [PL IND PRON]	any one of them	term implies the effect of "any one of" something in a category

224	tatotâkot [TA, FUT, 3, CONJ MODE]	to have him/her do things, affect in a certain way	how something will affect him/her; or simply "will affect him/her"
225	kâmâyâtahki(h)	refer to #201	refer to #201
226	tâpacihtat [TI, FUT, 3, CONJ MODE]	for him/her to use	to use
227	êkosi	refer to #167	refer to #167
228	êkâya(h) [CONJ MODE, NEG MKR, PART]	not to (refer to #61)	term indicates "not to" as in a command; also refer to #61
229	takisiwiskâk [TI]	to cause him/her to be in a state of anger	being affected in such a way as to cause a person to be in a state of anger by something said or done
230	ôhi	refer to #40	refer to #40
231	kâmasinahikâteki(h) [II, PL]	what is written about	refers to subject matter of text in its written form; quite simply, "what is written"
232	misâwâc [PART]	anyway, anyhow, due course (also refer to #100)	a state, in due course, or as a result of (also refer to #100)
233	êkosi	refer to #167	refer to #167
234	ehisipayik [II]	it happens, occurs	actually occurs or happens
235	konita [PART]	randomly and/or without reason or substance or purpose	implies a "nowhere" state, where something is done without reason or purpose
236	tatôtahk [AI, INDEF ACT, FUT]	for someone to do	to do or to act

237	tânwêtahk [TI, INDEF ACT]	he/she is not admitting to it	a person is not admitting to doing something actually done, as in to lie about having done something
238	nêstaw	refer to #208	refer to #208
239	ôhci	refer to #12	refer to #12
240	ehâpacihtât [TI, 3, CONJ MODE]	he/she has used it	a person to have used it
241	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
242	kôhânwehtahk [TI, INDEF ACT, 3]	for not admitting	past of not admitting to something actually done
243	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
244	tahkîkîkosowâsiw [AI, 3]	could be caused to be angered	term is repeated in text for emphasis: a person affected in a such a way as to cause to be angry
245	ewakoni(h)	refer to #9	refer to #9
246	mistahi	refer to #63	refer to #63
247	kîkway [INTERR PRON]	something	term implies information generally; in this case, as the whole information in text
248	ôma	refer to #22	refer to #22
249	mâmitonehicikan	refer to #23	refer to #23
250	nanâtohk	refer to #164	refer to #164
251	tesi-mîyo [PREV PART, S]	can - good	two-word term; first term implies "can" or "could" and second term implies "good" or "positive"
252	âpâcihtaw [TI, 3]	he/she will use it	a person will use it, will find it useful and beneficial

253	wîya [PERS PRON, 3]	a person	he or she; third person pronoun
254	tipiyawe [PART]	specific to that person or close to that individual person	emphasizes specificity to a person (he/she); term will change slightly in meaning depending on context; e.g., in this text, "close relative"
255	ayisiniw	refer to #30	refer to #30
256	tamâmitonehitahk [TI, FUT, CONJ MODE, 3]	that he/she think or ponder	act of entertaining a thought to be pondered on carefully
257	tânisi	refer to #5	refer to #5
258	esoskeyâcihot [AI, 3, CONJ MODE]	how he/she should find ways in leading a productive life	implies a zeal for creativity in the pursuit of a productive life
259	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
260	takakwe [FUT PART]	refer to #15	refer to #15
261	miskwehitahk [TI, CONJ MODE]	to find through thought	two-word term; first term is "to find" and second term is "to think" or "figure out"
262	tanisi	refer to #5	refer to #5
263	kikway	refer to #3	refer to #3
264	tesi [PREV PART]	on how to	like a prefix, has the meaning of "on how to" or "acting on"
265	kâhcitinahk [TI, 3, CONJ MODE]	to get, to obtain	to get, to obtain
266	tanisi	refer to #5	refer to #5
267	tetatoskêt [AI, 3, CONJ MODE]	a type of work or job	type of work or job, perhaps to suit needs of family

268	mîna	refer to #7	6refer to #7
269	peyakwan	refer to #16	refer to #166
270	ispihk [PART]	at the same level; to match up; when, whenever	term implies duplication of level of commitment to task; also has connotation to height of association with task
271	isi(h) [PREV PART, A BALANCED FORM]	as towards	similar in meaning to "tesi," can be used before term, or prefixed meaning "towards"
272	kâkîsimonihk [NI LOC]	at a place of prayer and ceremony	implies respect to the divine act of prayer, as in a place of prayer such as a ceremony; term has connotation of acknowledgement of divinity and the reciprocity of the sacred
273	tawîcihiwet [AI, 3, CONJ MODE]	a person go along with in a supportive manner	the helping of something as one goes along with it; adding to, through help and support of the whole and the collective
274	mâka	refer to #28	refer to #28
275	nawac [PART]	rather, more so, it is more desirable	implies imperative to *choose* something over another thing, usually for a special reason or purpose

. . .

276	pâpakwanaw [REDUP PART]	to describe being in a state of not knowing	*not knowing* for the purpose of using humility and humbleness; specifically it means to be in a state of unknowing
277	kâ-kâkîsimoh**k** [(*kâ-*=PREV PART); AI, INDEF ACT]	to pray, or to be in a state of prayer	when one prays, or when one is in a state of prayer
278	mistahi	refer to #63	refer to #63
279	e-âpatahk [II, CONJ MODE]	it is useful and beneficial	is useful and beneficial
280	ewako	refer to #76	refer to #76
281	ayisk	refer to #3	refer to #3
	. . .		
282	nistam [PART]	in the beginning, or at first	implies the start of something, or the beginning, as in historical terms
283	koh-osîhikoyahk [TA, CONJ MODE, 3, 1 DIRECT-INVERSE; 3 II]	when He created us or made us	implies creation of humanity
284	ka-ayisîniwîyahk [NA, 2I, CONJ MODE]	us as human beings	in saying this term, it is impossible to refer to "humanity" impartially as a separate entity from one's self; one is forced to be included in the term
285	ekosi	refer to #167	refer to #167
286	ekî-îsîhikoyahk [AI, CONJ MODE, PAST TENSE, 3-2I PL]	He made us in such a way...	implies *design* and *intention* of being created; purpose

287	tapakwanawâsîyahk [FUT, AI, 2I PL, CONJ MODE]	to be unknowing (see #280); to do things by heart or by memory	being in an unknowing state, as in #280; the variation in meaning here is that this term implies a continuous state
288	pâpakwanaw [REDUP]	refer to #280	refer to #280
289	takâkîsimoyahk [AI, FUT, CONJ MODE, 2I]	to consistently pray	consistency and continuity of prayer
290	kohtawînaw [NA, 2I]	our father	term specifically means "our father" and implies the creator or father
291	nawac	refer to #275	refer to #275
292	ewako	refer to #70	refer to #70
293	kisiskahtemakân [II]	it moves more rapidly	term implies movement at a faster rate
294	kâpâpakwanomohk [AI, INDEF ACT]	when said from an unknowing state (see #276); when words are said by heart	term implies prayers from a humble, "unknowing" state (see #276)
295	ita	refer to #47	refer to #47
296	kâ-isipeyimototâkawîyan [TA, FUT, 3-2 DIRECT AND INVERSE]	when you are relied upon from others	being relied upon for something by other people
297	takâkîsimôstamâkeyan [AI, FUT, 2]	to pray for others (see #277)	to pray for, or on behalf of, others (see #277)
298	nawac	refer to #275	refer to #275
299	otehihk [LOC, 3]	from one's heart	literally, "from the heart," term implies heartfelt emotion
300	ohci	refer to #12	refer to #12

301	ekâkîsimot [AI, CONJ MODE, 3]	he/she is praying (see #291)	term implies the act of prayer, the practise of prayer (see #291)
302	ekâkitimâkimot [AI, CONJ MODE, 3]	he/she says a humble prayer	refers to someone's giving a humble prayer
303	eyohcikawâpistah(k) [AI, CONJ MODE, 3]	he/she sheds tears for it [INAN]	to shed tears for something
304	okâkîsimowin [NI 3]	his/her prayer	one's own state of prayer, or prayer itself
305	ewako	refer to #76	refer to #76
306	akîhtew [II]	it counts, it pays	it counts, it has meaning
307	otêhihk	refer to #299	refer to #299
308	ohci	refer to #12	refer to #12
309	ekâkîsimot	refer to #301	refer to #301
310	ewako	refer to #76	refer to #76
311	nawac	refer to #275	refer to #275
312	kîhkahihtâhk [AI, CONJ MODE, 3]	he/she understood in divine manner	implies communication that is clear and understandable
313	manitowa(h) [NA, O']	the Spirit	term implies the Great Spirit, God
314	ekwa	refer to #136	refer to #136
315	ôma	refer to #22	refer to #22
316	ketwehk [AI, PL, CONJ MODE, INDEF ACT]	everyone said, when said	implication is reference to what has been said
317	ahpo	refer to #60	refer to #60
318	kâhki [PREV PART]	you can, or it is possible; ability	indicates a possibiilty of, or a potential for
319	kwêskehtamâw [TA, 3-3, DIRECT AND INVERSE]	he/she changes (another) his/her mind through speaking of words	specific to mean the changing of another's mind or thoughts through speech or words

320	ayisiniw	refer to #30	refer to #30
321	îkohk	refer to #55	refer to #55
322	e-mamâhtawahk [II]	it is powerful	implies power or influence
323	pîkiskwewin [NI]	speech, or words uttered; the spoken word	words, speech (implies the act of speaking)
324	mâmitonehitcikan	refer to #23	refer to #23
325	Hâw	(an agreeable expression, or a beginning phrase) refer to #1	refer to #1
326	kîya [PERS PRON]	you	second person pronoun, "you" (singular)
327	ekwa	refer to #136	refer to #136
328	tâkakwe	refer to #16	refer to #16
329	nistohtaman [TI, 2]	you to understand, comprehend	the understanding or comprehension of something
330	oma	refer to #22	refer to #22
331	mâmitonehicikan	refer to #23	refer to #23
332	kâtasîcikâtek [NI, IND PRON]	what is being talked about or elaborated upon	term implies the act of talking or elaborating a specific point, as issue or theme
333	kîspin [PART]	if	if
334	ewakoyikohk [PART]	two word term; refer to #70 and #55	two word term; refer to #70 and #55
335	tanisitohtahk [TI, 3]	(3rd person) to have understood (see #331); to understand	having understood (see #331)
336	awîyak [INDEF PRON]	someone	someone, an individual

337	mistahi [PART]	refer to #63	refer to #63
338	tamiyotôtahk [TI, FUT, CONJ MODE]	he/she will benefit from or to	to benefit, in a positive or good way, from or to
339	misowîsih [PART]	in all sorts, or varieties, of ways	term implies wholistic consideration of effects to the total being of an individual
340	tamiskowehitâmâsiw [TI, FUT, 3]	he/she will figure out ways, or methods, for himself/herself	term implies the entertaining of thought, creative or innovative thought
341	tahto [PART]	the amount, every	term implies units of continuity in terms of intervals, as in time; measurable, but taking one unit as the example or representative of all units
342	kîsikaw [II]	it is day	day
343	opimâtisiwinihk [NI, LOC, 3]	his/her life	implies reference to one's individual life
344	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
345	opimacihowinihk [NI, LOC, 3]	his/her own livelihood, or the making of a living	implication of reference to daily aspect of livelihood, of making one's living in a productive manner
346	mîna	refer to #7	refer to #7
347	têsih	refer to #264	refer to #264
348	manâcihtât [TI]	to respect something	term implies respect of something; the holding of something in reverence

CHAPTER V: INTERPRETATION

Introduction

The Elder's words speak for themselves.

The Elders teach in some ways that are unfamiliar to many people. In order for as many as possible to understand, I want to put forward some premises about how to listen to Elders (or to read texts, as Elder Louis Sunchild intended for this one). This is not put forward as ethnographic fact. These are principles that I have observed. Others may express them somewhat differently, or even have completely different insights into the way to interpret what Elders say.

Listening is a kind of active participation. In an unpublished manuscript that Carl Urion wrote for his own children at their request, he attempted to describe one of the principles of how to listen and to interpret. Though he discusses how to listen to "stories," many of the principles are the same.

> The way to interpret those stories has never been clear to the literate, academic community until recently. The stories are not just "texts," or narratives that deal with sequences of events in a linear progression of events.
>
> There are several classes of stories. For example, there are "sacred" stories as opposed to "historical" stories, and traditionally it has taken 40 years or so of apprenticeship for an individual to work to gain the authority to tell the sacred class of story. That length of time is not required just to learn the texts of the stories, nor how to perform them. It takes that long to acquire the principles for interpretation of the stories.
>
> There is a "surface" story: the text, and the things one has to know about the performance of it for others. The stories are metaphoric, but there are several levels of metaphor involved. The text, combined with the performance, contains a "key" or a "clue" to unlock the metaphor. When a hearer has that story, and knows the narrative sequence of it, there is another story contained within that story, like a completely different embedded or implicit text. The trick is this: that the implicit or embedded text, itself, contains clues, directions--better yet, specifications--for the interpretation of an implicit text embedded in it.
>
> Many sacred stories have multiple levels of embedded texts. The elements of a story fit and are coherent as complete texts at each level. The relationships of each specific surface element of a story to its manifestation (or interpretation) through various levels of

> embeddedness is also part of the structure of a story. It is an incredibly complex genre.
>
> A person who speaks the "high" version of the language, knows the principles for "unfolding" the stories, and has some degree of skill in constructing and telling such stories. There are checks for validity of the story at each level and between levels. The stories have to fit, precisely, at all levels, to be coherent.
>
> At some levels there is very explicit and precise spatial and temporal information. [He makes reference to a specific story, a version of which is included in the classic ethnography of the Crow, and he refers to some of the narrative sequence.] At one level, that sequence of the story contains a very precise topological description of a stretch of the Missouri River and the basin around it, just south of its confluence with the Yellowstone. At another level, that same sequence contains a very precise set of principles for relationships between specific kin. A hearer isn't meant to understand the story at all levels, immediately. It is as if it unfolds. (Urion, 1991)

Some of this same "unfolding" goes on when one listens to an Elder and ponders his or her teaching. I am going to discuss two assumptions and four structural principles that might help others see how Elder Louis Sunchild has intended his text to be read. The first assumption is the assumption of "thinking mutually." Then four structural principles are described. Then the last assumption, that of "resonance" is discussed.

Assumptions and Structural Principles

The Assumption of Mutual Thinking

It is assumed that there will be effort to think mutually with the Elder. The assumption is that active attention, humility of the hearer, and respect for the Elder, will put one in the frame of mind where the minds can meet. This is related the the first principle, discussed below.

The Structural Principles

The Relationship Between the Elder and the Hearer

The elder is vulnerable and makes himself/herself open. An Elder may speak gruffly, and may criticize, but for a specific purpose. In other words, an Elder does not express the relationship of vulnerability and compassion by trying to win the favour of the person who listens. That vulnerability and compassion can be expressed with the word *love*. But the words of truth of the Elders are sharp. Sometimes they seem to cut.

There is a recognition of responsiblity and authority. The authority is not an authority that can be physically enforced. It comes from the Elder's having expert knowledge about the context for knowledge, about the place that specific knowledge is appropriately brought out, and the readiness of the individual to perceive it. The interaction makes the Elder vulnerable because she or he has the responsibility to speak the truth; the ethos is self-enforcing, and a violation of it not only reflects that the Elder is wrong, but if the ethos is violated it can have resonant implications in other spheres of life.

These principles of the relationship between Elder and hearer are structural principles, because they affect the way that the Elder deals with the situation. It determines the degree of unfolding necessary, and so determines the kind of metaphor and the extent of metaphor. It means that Elders' teachings are *individualized*. With that said, it must be pointed out that there are *standard* systems of metaphor that apply to all, as well.

In the text that forms the basis for this thesis, Elder Louis Sunchild has made himself very vulnerable. This text could go anywhere (physically), and it could be misinterpreted, criticized, or mocked. If it is not right, or if it does not reflect the truth, it could mislead others; it was a consistent and deep concern of his not to mislead others, but to set in place the proper circumstances for "truth to happen." That concern motivated this topic. He completed the text in the hope that it would help people—help people think, and perhaps act. It is an expression of the love he had for people. In the text, the reader should try to note where it is that the Elder makes explicit or implicit statements about the authority of the statements he makes, and his relationship to those statements. He will make specific reference to the reader.

The Use of Metaphor in Specification

Metaphor is used in a system of mnemonics (memory symbols), so that implications of the metaphor can be seen to be appropriate in several different spheres or domains. The metaphors fit at every level of interpretation.

This text is full of metaphor. It would be impossible to unfold them all. Instead, as you, the reader, go through the text, look for examples of the way that the Elder has used *heart*. Sometimes it means the physical heart that beats inside a live body. Sometimes it means something more than that. When it means more than the physical heart, it always means the physical heart as well. That is one of the bridges between levels of meaning.

The Specification of Location of Self and Interaction in Time and Space

An elder almost always uses speech and nonverbal communication to point out, or establish, where the Elder, the hearer, and the conversation fit in time and place, to establish the temporal and spatial context for the interaction. In the dialogue, in the way that the Elder uses speech or demonstration, it often includes a kind of implying two reference points, and the hearer more or less

"takes a bearing" off those two reference points. This has the effect of immediacy. One of the feelings that seems to be created by an Elder is that a hearer always feels that they know where they are, or ought to be, in relationship to the earth. The immediacy almost means that the content of a talk with an Elder cannot stay at a level of the abstract. There is an implicit statement that "this is empirical." This sets a context for both interpretation and validity.

In this text, there are several ways in which the Elder draws the context for the text and the reader. An obvious place is his direct address to the reader. A not so obvious one, particularly to people who do not speak Cree, is the way he uses words that imply *location*.

One way in which the validity of the text is empirically tested is the extent to which the metaphors continue to unfold new meanings to the reader, meanings that the reader/hearer recognize as true; meanings that are observed in experience.

The use of systems of implication

Minds engage in mutual discourse; one of the structural ways this is effected is not to attempt to state everything categorically or specifically, but to state things in such a way that there is a continuing unfolding of the meaning, as the learner follows the implications of a statement, and then checks it for "internal coherence" to see if the learner is "putting it together" properly. It is based upon engagement and attention between the Elder and the learner.

Its meaning depends upon the cognitive act of grasping the meaning, realization, insight. It has this implication for learning and teaching: learning is not a product of transferring information between a teacher and a student. It is a product of creation and re-creation, in a mutual relationship of personal interaction, of information. It is not just a cognitive (mental) act, but an emotional—thus physical—act. Learning is felt. It is a sensation. It is something that involves emotions. And as the elder here points out, learning is ideally a spiritual thing, because the compassionate mind is one that is spiritually centred.

Here is a simple example of "implication." The Elder speaks of rising before dawn, that one should make a habit of doing that. He does not mention "prayer" in that connection, but that is what "rising before the sun comes up" implies.

The Assumption of Resonance / Reverberation

Description and language reference to many different domains and contexts. They are connected. Something spoken has an effect in multiple other domains. It resonates. That can be at the physical level, where spoken words physically vibrate the air, vibrate the eardrum, and resonate meaning.

In the same way, because domains are connected, because we are dealing with things wholistically, an *act* that we think of as being in one domain resonates in other domains. That means that when we think of something in one domain (e.g., "mental") of having an effect in other domain (e.g., "physical) it is not just that it has an "effect," it is that *it exists* in that other domain as well.

The elder is speaking of acts and mental states that resonate through the other domains than the one in which they are described.

Application of Structural Principles and Assumptions to the Text

The Elder's words speak for themselves.

Yet, to illustrate the assumptions and structural principles, a commentary is provided. The Elder's words are printed in boldface, and the commentary is indented.

This is not an attempt to say exactly what the Elder means. It is just an attempt to demonstrate how one can think of those structural principles and assumptions and get a glimpse of some of the deeper meaning of the text. The implications and interpretations of the text can sometimes have a different focus, depending upon the occasion and context. One person who saw a version of the text not long after it was written thought that a major implication of this text was that "lying, or being deceptive, is not just a mental state, but that it has a negative, physical effect on the body."

There are many things to discover here. This example is limited to two questions: (a) what does the Elder say and imply about the relationship between domains (mental, physical, spiritual, along with behavioral, emotional, and sensory)? and (b) what is implied about relationships between the self and others?

Hear ye; it is this: four things that I will be talking about, as to what they [say, mean] and how they are applied [used].

This is a formal introduction; "Haw, ewakoma" sets a more formal tone than conversation. The Elder does not count out the "four things" for us: it is for us to identify them and recognize them. He is clear that he is talking about both meaning and applications of meanings.

It is for the young [adolescents or younger] to understand, particularly [those at an age level where they are beginning to understand abstractions and complexities], for them to try to understand, so that this understanding will benefit them in the future.

The implication here is that those of us who work with young people should know these things, and be able to pass them on. By saying that "this

understanding will benefit them in the future," the Elder is indicating that this is a message that should "unfold": that is, we are to look for the relationships and metaphors that he is going to specify. Remembering the metaphors and relationships, we will gain understanding as we develop.

I will begin to talk first of all about the mind [consciousness], that possesses supreme awareness in a divine way; [it is pure intelligence].

The concept of the mind is introduced, and thus we can think of a "mental domain." By saying that it "possesses supreme awareness in a *divine* way" the Elder is making a connection between the mental domain and the spiritual domain. The mind is not just "ego" but has attributes that reflect the Creator.

The knowledge of this will benefit them in the future.

He repeats the proposition previously made.

A person is afraid to do something wrong because if they do something wrong, they can be [jailed, locked away, detained, cut off for a long time].

It could be said that here the Elder makes the first statement about the relationship of self to others. It might be paraphrased that human life is "connected" life: we are connected to others. The consequence of improper, immoral, or "wrong" behaviour is isolation.

As well, there is no life giving benefit for doing the things that I am going to point out.

The paraphrase might be "wrong behaviour is anti-life."

But before I begin to identify these negative influences to the minds of individuals, I will first of all say that the mind, or the divine vehicle that processes and receives thought, is located within the brain.

The Elder explicitly connects the mental domain with the physical (bodily domain), in the context of the mental domain reflecting the Creator.

It is therefore very important that great care should be given to the head area; the brain is divine and precious and great care should be given to ensure that the head that houses the brain should be protected from the cold.

This reinforces the mind as being "physically connected." It is a very clear reinforcement, because he uses the word "head" and "brain" and with the use of the term "cold" is contextualizing them in a wider environmental context. The development of the text to this point could almost be paraphrased like

this: "There is a unity of the mental domain with the physical, bodily domain; mental things are not 'purely' mental; far from it. The physical domain, and behaviour within the physical domain are so closely identified with the mental domain that they are in a practical and behavioural sense the same."

Also that care should be taken in giving proper rest to the mind.

This reinforces the foregoing and introduces a new thread:

Out of a 24 hour period, 7 hours should be sufficient for the proper amount of sleep for resting the mind.

There are two things (at least) to consider here. He says again, "physical behaviour has an effect on the mind." But he goes on to be very explicit, even specifying 7 hours within a 24-hour cycle. Note that he introduces implicitly the idea of a cycle, with a definite phase.

If you are consistent and disciplined in having the proper amount of sleep your body and mind will begin to adjust and to get used to this pattern.

If the idea of a cycle has been established in the preceding statement, just look at how it is expanded here. You could say that one of the things he raises is a kind of "rhythm" of mind-body harmony (and implied, because of all the foregoing, in the context of a harmony with the wider environment).

This will result in good health; your body will be rejuvenated as well as your blood.

The paraphrase and extension: physical well being is the result of behaviours that reflect mind-body harmony.

If you attempt to sleep longer than necessary, you will never have enough sleep.
This will only spoil your body as it will begin to like oversleeping.

When you wake up you will not be alert totally; you will dull your mind and senses.
You will feel slightly awkward physically as well.

Just look at the cycle of consequence here:
behavioural->physical->emotional->mental->physical.
(We might even discuss of "sensory" domain here, as well.)

In complying with this you have to rise early, usually before the sun rises.
Rising early has a profound effect on the heart and how it functions.
Your heart will beat properly, your blood will be [in proper condition].

You will not have heart disease.
It is the condition of your blood that affects the condition of the heart.

For anyone who has spent any time listening to Elders, to be told to rise early has a specific implication: that time before the sun rises is a time to prepare oneself for prayer, and dawn is a particularly appropriate time for prayer. It is not necessary to "read" that into the text, however. There is a certain trust that if a person is "in harmony," and rises early, the prayer is an automatic outcome.

The "heartbeat" introduces a "smaller" rhythm in the context of the rhythm of behaviour that is established with the "sleep cycle." This is one of those principles of "resonance." Here is an extension: the sleep cycle involves volition; an individual exercises willpower and discretion in determining to get enough sleep. The heartbeat is automatic. If a person exercises appropriate discretion in the things that a person has discretion over, the things that a person cannot control will fall into the appropriate phase or place.

The "heart" is a well-established metaphor that requires no explanation, but if one is forced to be explicit, it would be appropriate to say that "emotion" is a domain that is introduced here.

Cycles of consequence and unity—physical, emotional, and spiritual—are reinforced here.

Also one must exercise for the purpose of helping your heart to beat well; this is attained through physical activity.

The part of the cycle, behavioural->physical is reinforced.

Again great care should be given to the head and the heart.

The metaphor of head and heart, as a unity, are put together in the context of individual volition.

A person should not be constantly in an angry state, to not entertain bad thoughts.

This is the first in a list of categorical prohibitions. The emotional and mental domains are put together.

Do not take anything internally that could do damage to your brain as well as your mind.

The second, inclusive category of prohibitions is introduced here. The connection of the physical and mental domains is again reinforced, and the prohibition is a physical one that relates to inappropriate physical connection with substances in the environment, affected by behaviour.

I will start off by pointing out what will do harm to your brain and mind.
First, there is alcohol, and then marijuana, injected drugs and drugs ingested.
These substances will do your brain and mind harm.

The Elder has already introduced the idea of "discipline" and "consistency", and and put them together as what might be called "habituation." Here he talks about substances that "habituate" as well. He does not talk about them here as addictions, habituated behaviour, but as single instances. And of course, by saying "brain" and "mind" he reinforces that unity of domains.

As well as this, there are also activities such as gambling of all sorts, that will have the same effect.

Here is another "addiction," not noted as one here; just a statement that gambling (a behaviour) has the same effect as drugs and alcohol (physical substances).

You will be mean and angry, you will be easily agitated and difficult to deal with [stubborn, unwilling to listen to reason].
You might also begin to steal; you might also begin to be deceitful and manipulate your friends.
You will not have remorse in doing harm to your relative[s].
Eventually you may arrive at the point of killing another;
even to the point of committing suicide—
all because of the effects of taking something into your system which effects your thinking, your perception.

The consequences are emotional and behavioural. The victim is a person "out of (self) control." But refer back to the introduction, "a person is afraid to do something wrong ...", and the implication that the consequence is individual isolation. When the relationship of self with others is considered, the picture here is definitely isolation of self. The "natural" state, the harmonious state, of human beings is one of connectedness with others, friends and relatives.

Also another effect is that one may commit adultery because of the effects of exposing the mind to these things.
One will no longer possess the ability to respect and honour one's own body because that person will continue to commit adultery.
It is explicit here that a kind of causal chain, behaviour (doing physical things) affects the mind, which affects behaviour. The mind is not so much the mediator of these things as the location for the interplay or dynamics of these things: volition is gone; deceit within the close relationship of marriage is a form of abuse of self.

Eventually the person continuing to do these things that are harmful to one's consciousness will reach the point of being [mentally retarded

or handicapped, crazy, in a disturbed state, institutionalized], unable to control their life, unable to control their mental functions; one who is owned by the things I am talking about, that person does not function as a human being [i.e., sick minds, as of the insane, not realizing what madness is, an individual who is not centred within himself or herself].

The effect is cumulative; the "natural" state of harmony depends on one's volition and will, but seemingly unrelated "mental" or "behavioural" things deprive one of the true human nature.

In other words they are no longer human because the do not posses the compassionate mind.

The statement is explicit: the human mind is meant to be connected to others in compassion; love.

These individuals will throw away their children [family break ups].

The self-other relationship is shown again in the context of the sacred relationship of parenthood.

All because of the effect of any one of these things that are not good.

Here again is the idea of consequence; *any one* of the things that "are not good" will violate harmony and throw one off centre.

So in saying these truths I urge that the person reading these written words not let [the reading of it] anger them.
Because it is just the way it is.
Should a person dispute what I am saying it is because that person is involved in any one of these things [is trying to justify their action].

The Elder contextualizes this discourse, this written text, in terms of its readers. He anticipates "this time" and "this place" (as you and I read his writing) and personifies us as readers. He also makes the statement that what he has described is absolute.

A person has within the ability to use the mind in a good way.
A person should try to be [be zealous to be] creative in their thinking in finding was of getting a livelihood (bread and butter).

This might be paraphrased as "a human has the ability to do good, in terms of physical things."

Equally important in this pursuit of a good life is having a strong spiritual life.
To involve oneself in prayer and ceremony.

However to pursue spirituality through a humble means, to exercise humility and compassionate mind.
Not to act or behave as if one is in possession of supernatural abilities.
It is better [to act] from the humble state of knowing nothing which really and truly benefits [is useful to] a person, rather than to possess supernatural abilities.

And here is the spiritual domain again, which he raises as being of equal importance in the conduct of a "good life."

It is important to note that he includes both "prayer" and "ceremony," because "ceremony" is the physical, behavioural, even "ritual" participation in prayer, not simply a "mental state." It is in that context that he implies, again, a relationship with others, because the demonstration of "supernatural" abilities is for others to observe.

"Self-centredness" is a word that might be used to describe the frame of mind he says is best for prayer, but meaning something quite different from its usual meaning. This "self" should centre on self in a way that recognizes that power is from outside oneself, from the Creator; to recognize what we do not know, rather than to profess what we know.

Because in the beginning when God created humanity, God intended us to be humble and to approach everything in a humble way.
Elders say that what counts is the sincere prayer that is said from the heart.
A prayer said with deep emotion where one will have tears.

This establishes the "natural" state of humans, and goes for authority to what the "Elders" say.

Now this what we are saying concerning the mind which is life [aliveness] and the spoken word which is life-giving, and the both having divine life giving power; [they] can be used in sharing the knowledge of these truths to others and moving [inspiring] them to change their lives because of it.

Here is a new set of relationships. Mind is life. The spoken word is life-giving. "Both [have] divine life-giving power." We have the opportunity to be in a mental state, and to use words, in such a way that others have *life*.

So now you should try to understand this compassionate mind.

So now you should try to understand this compassionate mind.

Even if a person understands a portion of what was discussed, then it is of benefit, that much more, to that person.

A person will entertain and process new thought and insights into life every day, as well as in their own livelihood.
A person will do themselves good if they respect their mind.
Just the realization of that miraculous nature of the mind is something to think about.

This speaks for itself.

Even the Creator used thought, mind consciousness, in the process of creation itself, in all that is seen.

It is fairly clear that the "divine principle" spoken of throughout this text is the human capacity to use the mind. This is how humans are made "in God's image," to use the Judeo-Christian concept.

Because of the awesome nature and power of the mind, it is only right that it be given the utmost respect and reverence.
If a person had something less than what is blessed in mind potential to all, then that person cannot hope to survive or at least to function effectively.
[There are modern means of helping addicted people, ultimately hoping to dry out a patient long enough for that patient to pray in a sober state of mind.]

These statements, as well, are self-evident. In them the Elder is making a summary statement of what he said before.

A person will benefit tremendously for the afterlife by following these truths toward life.
When a person passes on in this life, he only dies bodily.
The mind and spirit continues to exist and live.

After having stated the unity of the domains (mental, spiritual, physical, along with behavioural, emotional, and sensory) the Elder notes that the body "drops out" of the system upon passing away. It is mind and spirit that endure. Note that there is nothing to say that mind and spirit are less "physical" than before, just that the body has died.

As an individual, speaking on my own behalf, I do not have anything to be considered better than others.
I am only a person who knows nothing.

This is a claim for the authority of the teaching, not for the authority of the Elder. It is not a "ritual disclaimer" of authority. It is an implicit claim that the ethos is the origin of these teachings.

There are other effects that I did not mention earlier that I will mention.

This concern I have, of this being a global problem, is certainly evident in the physical manifestations of the abuse of the mind.
There is disease that developed because of this, and some of these are diseases of the bones, loss of hearing, insanity, blindness.
One should not feel that these are meant for any specific individual but rather that this is a concern that affects all humanity.

Here is a statement of large-scale connectedness. When one person violates that potential, or abuses self or others, or denies himself or herself the possession and practice of the compassionate mind, all suffer the consequences.

For generation upon generation since time immemorial our people have taught these human truths and principles for the holistic survival of everyone.

The larger connectedness is explicit and goes beyond just the cultural group: First Nations peoples have known these truths, but they are not applicable for only First Nations people.

CHAPTER VI: DIALOGUE AND EPILOGUE

Dialogue

I could not write a summary called a "conclusion" without violating the principles of interpretation of text for the culture in which it was written, because the interpretation is never concluded.

The Elder's text reminds me of my connectedness to others. My description of some of the principles involved in teaching things of this nature tells me that there is an advantage in thinking mutually with another learner or teacher. Because of that, I follow the direction in the text as I create a preliminary statement of synthesis of the ideas in the text, by collaborating with another inquirer.

As a step toward synthesis, after translation and interpretation had been completed, I began a series of discussions with my collaborator, who had read and discussed all of the work to that point. A series of meetings for discussion followed, over a period of several months. Finally, we were prepared to make a summary of our discussion, but it could not be done in isolation. I asked my collaborator to agree to engage in a dialogue that could be recorded and transcribed, so that readers of the thesis could see the progression of topic through the discourse. It was important that the dialogue not be "staged," but that it be a real event of dialogue.

Reviewing all the material to that point, I made a list of eight topics, key terms, and questions that were essential to be covered, gave that to my collaborator and asked him to think of those topics but to formulate his own questions, so that it would be as spontaneous as possible.

Several days later I audio tape-recorded a meeting in which my collaborator interviewed me, with questions and comments based on the topics I had provided him. I made a transcript of that interview, and then edited it. It is presented here. In editing, hesitations, repetitions, and so forth, were taken out, and in some cases where reference to ideas was clear in the context of conversation but not in transcript form, phrases have been expanded to make the reference clear.

The questions are shown, indented and in italics.

The old man that wrote this script knew that you were going to deal with it in this way. He gave you permission to do it, along with the responsibility of doing it in the right way. He put a burden of trust on you, trust that you would know not to violate certain knowledge that might be misinterpreted out of context, and trust that you would honour the proper protocols as you completed your own work with this text. We know that if the protocols are violated, it reflects not on the ethos itself, but on ourselves, because the ethos protects itself. One of the ways we begin this kind of discussion is with that

knowledge. I wonder if you could explain what it means when we say that the ethos protects itself.

I once asked the Elder who wrote this text about that; actually, I did not ask him formally, but it came out during a dialogue. We used to have long visits together. Once we were talking about certain things related to what you and I are talking about here—the ethos, its inviolability, and the requirement to have respect for it—and I recall his saying this: he said that it is important that protocols be respected because of the divinity behind the ethos.

It is difficult to find a way to express that statement properly; maybe what I should do is just to repeat exactly what he said. He said that it is important to perform the appropriate protocols because an individual can hear truths being talked about publicly. That was the example he used and this is what it means: perhaps at a public gathering, or even a small one, where some truths are being expressed by Elders, the Elders will express those truths and the truths will have the impact that they are supposed to have in that context. An individual can take those same truths and say them at another gathering some time later. The effect of that truth will last in those who hear it—maybe a year or two years—and then they will forget it; they do not stay with the truth, and the effect of the truth does not stay with them. However, if one follows the protocols, in all of their explicitness, those truths remain forever.

The Elder was in his late 70s and he still remembered word for word some of the things that he heard when he was a young man, because of the protocols that he followed. He followed the protocols and he said those things and they remained.

He consistently told me that. He would always want to say "Look at me as the example of what I'm doing. It seems that it is impossible that this could occur [verbatim memory] but I'm the living example: *because of the things that I say, the certain things that I keep in my mind stay there.*"

He said that the retention and expression are almost automatic, as if it did not even require "thought," as we usually think of thought in the standard sense of "planning what you are going to say." It is more of *centredness* for what you are going to say (though "centredness" is more my comment and not so much his); but that is what I understand him to say: more of a centredness. And it is automatic if the protocols are followed.

That discussion suggests something very closely related to the protocols: the Elder had the authority to deal with these things and to express them in a way that was consistent with the ethos.

Absolutely; that is the authority, the protocol.

If someone says these things—teaches another, attempts to define the truth, or in fact describes "the culture"—without the authority to do so, it has no meaning?

It has no meaning and it doesn't sustain itself.

Without authority it doesn't sustain itself; and the thing that determines how it sustains itself, the aliveness of its sustaining itself, is time. The Elders use time as the example: how long will a teaching last before it "powers out," before it loses its energy.

You might want to express the endurance of it as "spiritual energy." When I hear the term *ethos* and I try to think in my language of a way to make it understandable to me—to understand how the concept *feels*—I have to define it as *truth*. That is the definition I feel most comfortable with.

One cannot reach truth through the vehicle of deception.
That is like taking a short cut. Deception in that sense is going against the authority to use something without protocols. I think that can be defined as deception, because one is bypassing the path to get to the truth. When the path itself is part of the ceremony or ritual, you are forced to function within the confines, within the domain, of truth.

Now if you're forced to do that, then the process has to start within you. For you to grow in terms of love and spirit and feeling, you have to be true to yourself for that growth to have some sort of starting point. When one is true to oneself, through the acceptance of self, then acceptance of oneself begins to happen; it automatically occurs. Thus we get to the level of acceptance of oneself and from that point on it is an outward growth. When that begins to occur, realization of humility, being humble, manifests itself. Then and only then does the ethos, quietly, in purity and divinity, move within our lives.

It sustains itself; the ethos simply goes along. When we have got ourselves to a level where we can see the preciousness of it, we want to protect it; we have a natural tendency to do so.

We want to keep the ethos and our relationship with it—our living in it—precious. If one does that, one sees the limitations one possesses, one's shortcomings, in relationship to the preciousness of the ethos, but the *human nature* of that relationship, and the realization that our shortcomings are included as part of the relationship. Because the Elders realize that, realize their own human natures, when they teach others they very often begin by quoting the authority of the Elders who have gone before. They do not state the authority as coming from themselves. They will say things like "This is what they used to say," or "This is what they said."

That is probably why Elders, the forefathers, the ancients, were and are quoted this way: "This is what has been said." The acknowledgement of humility in

the face of the power of the ethos reflects the natural tendency, automatically and unconsciously, to want to keep the teachings about the ethos in its pure state. The Elder once told me never to say that it was because of me that anything good happens. Even with that Elder it was important for him to try to remain in that one state of humility and humbleness. It is so important to stay there. They want you to remain in that place, or state of mind.

So, the Elder would imply that it wasn't because of him, it is because you and he were in the right place, in the right frame of mind, for the ethos to work.

Yes, and if anyone takes any benefit from this work, we have been vehicles for the expression of the power of the ethos.

It is not easy to try to stay at that level of humbleness and humility, particularly when one is young. In my case, I don't profess to know anything at this level, especially with something like this expression of traditional teaching which is so precious. The difficulty in trying to remain humble points to the need for prayer, the need for people to stay within prayer. Prayer is ultimately the thing we have to keep going back to.

That is what keeps us in line with the ethos in a humble way?

Yes. I am not sure, but it seems to me that perhaps the state of having a compassionate mind is making oneself a part of the ethos, or to put it more modestly, less ambitiously, and more safely, having a compassionate mind may be a movement towards it.

It is the important thing the way that you approach the ethos, the state in which you approach the ethos?

I think our discussion points to the realization that no matter what we do or what we say, ethos will remain protected because a person has to be humble. We have no choice. Elders tell us—I've heard many times—that we are not perfect (though actually they do not use the concept of perfection), but that we can achieve the total centredness of remaining on that path that they talk about. Because we are human beings with certain limitations. They say in Cree: *kīkway eakihtek kīkwayah anima eakihtek*: what really counts is the effort. That means effort in terms of being as truthful as possible, to remain in truth a much as possible. They usually end many of the talks about these teachings of humbleness, centredness, remaining on the path, and maintaining oneself as a searcher for, and professor of, the truth, by saying "It will take you far" or literally "Far, it will take you."

One of the principles that is evident in this text is something that the Elder consistently reiterates, but in an implicit way: the unity of the heart and mind. Because he discusses the mind as a physical thing and the heart as a physical

thing, and twice he talks about the heart and mind being together, that unity must be related to the ethos too.

Absolutely. In the text he is trying to stress the importance of a learning process that is *total*, a process of internalization and actualization within oneself in a total way. That means that a learning process is something that is felt. It is like saying, of your teacher, at that state of realization that you have learned something, "I hear and feel you at the same time."

That is another way of saying that learning must be experienced in its total sense, that when something is intellectualized it cannot be only intellectualized, but that we have to rely for learning on our total self, our whole self, our mental capacities as well as our emotional capacities.

Can you separate the mental and cognitive from the emotional in learning? Is there a distinction in the process? Isn't the process itself a single process?

The distinction is only a useful analytical distinction. The unity of the process is not just cognitive and emotional, but physical and spiritual: the total, the unity, includes all of those.

I used to hear people a generation or two older than I was talking about how things were a long time ago, and they used to say that Elders would "be afraid" of something specific that was under discussion. The specific things, in their totality, gave me the impression that the Elders were concerned about the influences of negative things penetrating the *total* consciousness of individuals. In light of what the Elder has said in this text, when I use the term *consciousness* I mean the whole thing: the conscious and subconscious mind, spatial perception, the physical, the mind, the brain and the heart; all of it. The Elders were concerned about the totality of those things and the connectedness of those things, and the fact that the domains do not exist independently, so that a negative influence existed in all domains. Here is an illustration of that connection amongst domains. Recently one of the Elders—an uncle of mine—and I were talking about the raising of children and the loss of the Cree language. Our discussion had begun when we both expressed concern about the many problems young people face, social problems and such things. He implied that unity of domains and the possibility of effecting change when he said that it is not hard *physically* to get up, *physically* walk a few steps, and *physically* to turn the knob on the television set to "off."

That is all he said but it had an impact in how he said it. That told me that anything and everything has an effect on us. We have to be careful how much exposure we give to our being, to things, to environments, to situations, to circumstances. I think that is what the Elders were afraid of.

The things we give ourselves to, we become a part of and they can own us.

Yes once those things penetrate we might get a taste for them. And the taste of them provides a false sense of security. Then we get into the addictions. In the text the Elder talks about that. In the text he was giving a prescription for what one should do to try to be as close to compassionate mind as possible, to do the things that prepare and move an individual consistently toward that objective. Once those simple things are done consistently they become disciplined within. The doing of them does not become a burden, because you become that way; you take on that nature. You have balanced your being in terms of character. Your foundation is solid.

Refer back to the comment about the Elders being afraid of certain things: one of the ways to express what they were afraid of was, as you stated, people being owned by something. Ownership and control refer to addictions, and not just to substances but to gambling as well. An addiction is like being owned by something. Addictions are not just to substances and activities, but can also be to concepts, ideas, or issues; it could be to anything.

The text is about trying to be free and about the achievement of freedom. Perhaps compassionate mind is a free mind.

The Elder seems to be giving us that kind of direction. So am I right in summarizing that compassionate mind is both a physical and a spiritual concept, that you cannot separate the physical from the spiritual, and that there are physical ways of achieving compassionate mind or violating it? And he tells some of the negative things that a persons does. The positive methods he mentions are ceremony and prayer, and those are physical things and spiritual things at the same time?

Yes, absolutely at the same time, there is no separation between physical and spiritual. The Elder keeps going back and forth between physical and spiritual domains, and does not make a distinction or separation between the two. If a person really looks at the text, she or he will begin to see that: the Elder seems to keep going back and forth in his reference to physical and spiritual domains.

That may appear simple, but it is preface to a great deal of complexity. In order to understand the complexity, one has to attempt to approach the very state of mind the Elder is talking about. I recall one of the Elders talking to students about the Cree culture's perspective on life itself, how one should conduct their life, and seeing the students realize the awesome nature of the amount of information that is there to try to understand. The Elder saw this and expressed it in Cree, "epīsākwa, pīsākwan." That means that there is a lot to it, that it is very detailed, very immense. To talk about it would have taken a considerable amount of time because he would have to break at every point, until the students saw the elements in the context of the whole picture and then be able to get understanding. The difficulty, the immensity, was compounded because many of those students have not done the things that the Elder prescribes in the text which you and I are considering. That means that they are already ill equipped as students. Had they come in the frame of mind

prescribed in the text, they would have been equipped to learn and the complex concepts would have been much easier to grasp.

One of the things the students asked of the Elder was "Can you make a statement or a general rule, a teaching that would really help us try to bring ourselves into focus, to try to bring ourselves in line with what you are saying, to begin to move towards being strong culturally?" And the Elder responded by saying "Yes, live for spirit, not for flesh," and left it at that. That is one of the ways the present text may be interpreted. You know it is interesting that many of these Elders make these statements with somewhat different emphases, and sometimes different metaphors, but they are all pointing to the same thing, to the same focal point of ethos.

People may focus on simply physical things even if those physical things have a spiritual aspect. The ceremonies may be considered to be physical things, because one can engage in the physical practice of a ceremony, or physically put one's self into a posture of prayer. Is that enough to separate it, ceremony, from how one conducts the daily life? A ceremony cannot be just physical, can it? Doesn't participation in a ceremony have to involve honest connection of heart and mind, along with the physical practice? Is that in the text?

One of the people back home was sharing an experience he had with an Elder. The Elder told him that if one does the things that all the Elders are talking about, including the positive things that are mentioned in the text that we are dealing with, the individual will *feel* it. A person will feel what might be called a divine presence in the joining of the mind and the heart as one. The point is that you will actually feel it. I heard this a long time ago and I often ponder what it means. After reading the text that the Elder has written it begins to make sense.

So far it seems as though we have been talking about implications for the way an individual deals with himself or herself. What is the implication in the text for the person's relationship with others?

I think the best way to answer that is to say that you are I and I am you. It has to do with unity and indivisibility as a principle. That can apply to unity and indivisibility amongst people.

I used to hear this when I was growing up. My grandmother began raising me when I was 11 years old. Because my grandmother was an Elder I was exposed to many of those teachings. She not only counselled and taught me, she would also be counselling and teaching my uncles and aunts, and I would hear those teachings. I recall that she would say not to harm people, not to harm another person, because in a sense it would be harming yourself. She said that it always comes back to you anyway. That might be expressed in the Western saying, "what goes around comes around." The teaching is based on the observation that relationships between people are inevitably reciprocal, in the

large scheme of things. We were small and young so the way of explaining that had to be simplified for us. I think that at the time it would have been difficult to understand that whole concept of oneness and unity of people. In an ideal situation, that concept would be taught to us in more detail later on, but when you are young the teachings are based on practicality.

Even when you are old, though, you see people that you feel a particular inclination to be one with, and others with whom you do not. Isn't the teaching "practical" for those of us who are old(er), because it is hard to conceive of "unity" with some people, isn't it?

It really is hard. But it is a principle that is observed in other traditions, isn't it? There are certainly Christian teachings associated with that as well. An example of that principle in action is the story of Jesus being struck on the face and not responding to it.

That reinforces what the Elder wrote at the end of his text, where he talks about conditions that come upon all of us, such as blindness, loss of hearing, and diseases of bones, that are the results of individual imbalance but affect us all, collectively, because of failure to follow these ways. When one individual is out of balance, we are all out of balance. That is a reinforcement of this statement of unity between people.

There is another aspect to this collectivity. Some Elders say that doing things collectively is very easy. Traditionally, many of the ceremonies that they used to hold were conducted by a large group of people. There was a requirement for unity in having to perform a ceremony in a collective way. The Elders would always say that it is much easier that way, rather then doing it oneself. The mutual help in the performance of the ceremony is a manifestation of unity, an acknowledgement that the whole is greater that the sum of its parts. When one looks at Cree culture in terms of individuality and unity, one of the things that is particularly impressive is the idea and practice of connectedness, the "belonging" nature of the culture. Individuality and unity are not opposites. The whole is figured in terms of the family, not only as in the immediate family or extended family, but as universal family, with God as the father. When that is elaborated in all its complexity there is an identity with creation. We can speak of Nature as being us.

Are there other things that follow from the text that we might have missed? Other implications or ideas that follow from it?

I would like to share some observations that I have made as I have dealt with the text.

During the past few years I have been fortunate to have been involved in various ways in education in my own community, and I have been fortunate to learn some things, sometimes unexpectedly, in the course of my work. One of

those involvements has been as a translator—though I don't consider myself to be a good translator, but there are not that many around so sometimes they have no choice but to use my services. One of the occasions for which I was translating was at a meeting of non-Indian social workers. They were discussing some of the difficult issues around foster parenting and related matters. Those issues are complex, but there was a statement made by an Elder at that meeting that, though it is very straightforward, sticks in my mind. He said "A child needs love, growing up. In all the discussions we have at this meeting we shouldn't forget that. They have to have love."

Another statement that Elders make is about the Path road. Life is often described as a path. Where does this path lead? Perhaps it is a path to enlightenment. The Elders keep telling us to keep on the path, to try to stay on the path, and they say that it is a difficult path to follow.

The Elder in this text does not use the term *path* at all, but it is there. It is implied, at least. I do not want to put words or notions in the Elders text, but in the context of a discussion of "limitations," and in the context of all else that I have learned from Elders, I think of the limitations in connection with the path.

> *Sometimes when we think of the path, we think that we should have a map for it, instead of just a light that illuminates the one next step.*

The path is through a training ground, perhaps; perhaps physical life on this earth is a training ground, and it is important to only go one step at a time, that we get sufficient light to take us to the next step, rather than seeing the whole road as it goes along. Perhaps that has something to do with the way we discuss the ethos, and its self-protection.

> *Because we would violate the ethos, and thus ourselves in the end, if we tried to have the whole consciousness, knowledge of the whole path.*

We are not equipped, yet, to be able to deal with the knowledge of the whole path. I think it is because of that, when one aligns one's self in respect of compassionate mind in the doing of the physical things, a person moves that much more towards spiritual growth. So what is spiritual growth? Perhaps it is a feeling, an emotion, but one that has a physical, interactional, mental complement: perhaps the ultimate goal is for one to function totally with unconditional love.

Throughout the history of humanity, in all cultures, there have been individuals who have been able to attain that state. For one to be truly "connected," in the domains which we have been discussing, and in a state to recognize the unity and indivisibility of humans, one has to love.

The reciprocal nature of naturally ordained relationships about the giving of love means that it comes back. Our human unity can be expressed "I love you because you are all members of my family."

What a tall order.

One last question about the text: the Elder says that he is going to discuss four things. Why does he say four? He doesn't point out what those four things are. It is possible to go through the text and identify four main topics, four things, but I can find no confirmation of the four things. (Note that in keeping with the principles of resonance and the structural principles involved in metaphor, the interpretation of a text such as this is not a matter that relies only on intuition. The metaphor is a system. That means that intuitions are checked and constrained by a requirement that they be coherent within the system. An idea is tentative until it is confirmed. That is the "confirmation" referred to here.)

It is interesting that he said that. I have to qualify this by prefacing my statement with "I think, and it's a big 'I think,'" that the four things he is referring to must be more than what we can fathom right now. I think it is one of those cases in which the metaphor has to be uncovered and may take years before we actually begin to truly feel what he is saying.

What I would venture to say is that he is saying all of the things he needs to say with respect to the protocols. That is, it may have something to do with dimensionsal understanding that, for now in our history, we are not at the level of being able to understand. If you look at the Cree term for Cree people is "Nehīyaw, Nehīyawak" (singular and plural). The word "Nehīyaw" can be broken down into its sound components to find root words. "Newo," means four and "-īyaw" or "mīyaw" means "body." That means "People of the four body." Four is a metaphor of tremendous sacred significance. I suspect that it also has to do with the psyche, the subconscious, spiritual consideration, and more importantly the sacred significance of our being human beings. That is the best I can do with that question.

Does that also mean "four dimensions" or perhaps "four domains"? After the Elder introduces this idea of four, he begins by focusing on physical things; could it be that he refers to four dimensions such as physical, spiritual, mental, and—what else? I don't know but maybe that is in there to find out at a later time.

The fourth category may be "emotional," because he stresses the need to be in a humble state and to act in a heart-felt manner: to rely on our feelings as human beings, the feelings of compassion and love.

That may be it. But I suspect there is still more.

Epilogue

When all participants assist in a ceremony in all its aspects, what is it that motivates them to work together? It seems obvious to me that they are all functioning in that process called "mutual thinking." Although the motivation for involvement may vary in degree, it basically comes to one focal point, *life*.

Is it, perhaps, that the reason for ceremony is necessary for the practice of collective thought? I have no answer and do not know. Perhaps at one level that is so, but I think that there is much more to it, which must involve multiple domains and multiple contexts and dimensions.

Even to keep a focus on the domain of the practice of mutual thinking, or collective thought, would create a universe of discourse. I would suspect that such a universe would include the physical, intellectual, spiritual and emotional faculties involved in the human experience individually and collectively. In the text, the Elder's reference to the "four things" that he was going to talk about is perhaps an allusion to this multidimensionality.

Several years ago there was an Elder who often said profound things in his answer to questions that I posed to him. One question was not so much "a question" as a whole series of ambitious inquiries that reflected my desire to know and to understand life, and to understand how our culture looks at life and the human condition and purpose. His response was that for me to truly understand, to grow in awareness of all, my mind must be like the plume of an Eagle. (The plume is the soft downy part of the feather.)

It may be many years before I begin to comprehend the meaning of that statement, and maybe the statement is designed to effect precisely the kind of inquiry to which it has led me. Maybe the Elder knows that it may be years after his passing on that meaning will develop and grow from life experience, study, and observation.

One thing that I am beginning to comprehend is that, in basic terms, all Elders are saying the same thing. The message is all one and the same, but expressed from many different perspectives and from multiple angles. I am sure that the stories have this same unity.

From my own experience, based on my perception and the thoughts that represent the accumulation of my involvement with a number of Elders, their teachings, and the forms that their teachings take, I would like to share some thoughts and ideas related to the text. The first is to point out that the more information and knowledge I come upon, the more obvious it has been how little, if anything, I know. The knowledge seems to be layered, like an onion.

Many years ago I assisted an Elder in some things that he wanted to do that were ceremonial in nature. He needed the assistance of a number of Elders one day and asked if I would go and see three Elders and present them with

material for protocol. The Elder never told me what the protocol was, he only gave me the things to be used in the protocol. I did not realize that I was about to learn something important, useful, and beneficial for my own development and growth.

I don't remember the other events of the day but I do remember very well one Elder and what he said to me. I found that Elder sitting in his parked vehicle with his wife, directly in front of the main store in Hobbema. It was about 11:00 a.m. on a Saturday and many people were there milling around, shopping and visiting. I parked my vehicle next to the Elder's and got out of mine. I walked over to his window and tapped on it lightly. He rolled his window down and looked at me with no expression on his face. I proceeded to give him the things I had been given to present to him and told him he was needed. He looked directly at me with a very angry expression and intense eyes, and said that I did not follow the protocol, that young people do not respect the protocols today, and that I did not know anything. By that time I felt smaller then an ant looking for a hole to crawl into because we had attracted a lot of attention.

My initial reaction was one of total embarrassment and then anger. There was no escape, as I would look even more sillier and more ridiculous if I had run or walked away. Besides, something within seemed to want to stay to experience the situation to its end. He proceeded in a loud and forceful way—yet almost lovingly as well—to tell me the protocol in its entirety. When he had finished what took only five minutes, but which seemed like two hours, his wife gave him the elbow-to-his-side gesture and angrily told him to give me a break, that I was young and naive in the ways of proper protocols.

I do not remember much of the events of that day except for that, but I do remember the protocol and have used it more times that I can remember. In many ways and in practical terms it has been the most useful information I have come upon.

Last year that Elder passed away. Reflecting then, and pondering what he had said to me at the time, I came to realize that in fact he loved me enough, in consideration for my own well-being and future, to tell me something that would benefit me beyond measure. The benefit has had a resonant effect, in that I have shared the information of protocol to very many young people who have probably needed it very much. Perhaps we will never fully realize how beneficial it has become for many people. In retrospect I am thankful to the Elder in a loving way for his compassion.

Protocol is very, very important. The transfer of authority comes with responsibility. It may take a person until he or she is at an advanced age to master the ability to assess others who are in pursuit of authority, to have "paid their dues," so to speak, through life experience and observation. Perhaps that is why authority lies with the Elders.

Elders are truly amazing in their ability to look at an individual and determine how much that person can retain, the level at which it must be expressed, and the content that is appropriate for that person. Many times I've seen that glimmer in their eye, the compassionate smile or laugh that told me that they knew exactly where I was, and how I thought as an individual. They knew how far I have developed and how far—a long way—I need to go to grow and learn. Although they did tell me certain things that I could not comprehend at the time, they knew that I would eventually arrive at a point of comprehension.

During the time when I was involved with the Elder who told me about my mind and the plume of the Eagle, there was a pattern that we followed for those sessions. The Elder stayed at my home for about two weeks and everyday at approximately noon, or shortly after, we would have a session that lasted approximately two to three hours. He would always end our session by saying "That is all for now." Those sessions were always meaningful and extremely interesting, and I would always be left feeling that I wanted more. In respect though, I would decline an extension of the session. It was during one of these very interesting and fascinating sessions that I simply could not contain myself. I asked the Elder if he would kindly continue the session. I wanted more. The Elder declined my request and said that it was too much information for my system, that I would get confused or I would later forget the valuable knowledge and it would not be useful or beneficial to me. I agreed, but went on to ask clarification of a detail he had discussed earlier. He agreed to that and began to elaborate. I then asked for clarification on that, hoping he would go back to what we were originally talking about. Before I realized it, we had spent another one hour and a half. I was elated by the experience and we ended the session for the day.

Several months later, while reflecting on our sessions, I realized that I did not remember a thing from that extended session. The Elder had been absolutely right.

Though I have had many interesting sessions with a number of Elders, none so moved me, to bring me to development in life as a Cree person, as the late Elder Louis Sunchild of the Sunchild Band. Elder Sunchild came to be more than just my Grandfather, and more than just my mentor, more than just my teacher, and more than just my friend. To talk about the person and his life I would need volumes. My involvement with this Elder was a mere eight years and in that time I have seen and I have felt.

Elder Sunchild was in his eighties when he passed on. He resided on the Sunchild Reserve just west of Rocky Mountain House. He was responsible for the creation of the reserve. It is named after him because he gathered his people together and asked the Government to give him the reserve in order to provide a home for them. He selected the area and walked around the land to establish the boundaries of the reserve. His Treaty number was Treaty Number

1. Elder Sunchild had many children and a large number of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Physically he was fit, strong and trim. He consistently rose early in the morning, usually before 5 a.m. When he would spend the night at my home, I would always ask him, before we went to sleep, at what time he wanted me to wake him up. He would always laugh.

When he arrived to visit, the Elder would kiss and hug all the children and then come and give me a bear hug. On many occasions he would stroke my hair and my face and shoulders, and give me baby talk. I remember feeling very small, very loved, by this act. Many hours were spent talking together about many things. He would tell me about old times as he was growing up, what was said and what was done. Winter nights were spent telling the stories that are told only during that season.

In everything that we did he would always pray, and encourage me to do likewise.

Elder Sunchild worked at Maskwachees Cultural College for a number of years as the resident Elder. He always felt that education was a vehicle that could be used to provide knowledge of culture and language to the younger generation and to generations to come. Many considered him to be one of the best, if not the best, syllabic writer and syllabics teacher in the area.

In providing the text to me, he was focused on his concern for the transfer of knowledge to succeeding generations. The text on compassionate mind is certainly indicative of his desire for the happiness, balance, and well being of all people.

Perhaps if we as educators, administrators, leaders, and parents were to begin seriously to consider and then to introduce a philosophy of educating for balance, harmony, and well being for the human condition, we would be doing something that would truly have meaning in our lives.

I believe our survival as people depends on it. We certainly have the responsibility for seeing to it, because what we do today will affect future generations to come.

I think the present resident Elder at Maskwachees Cultural College put it well when he gave a talk to some university students. He said "Close your eyes so that you can see further."

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